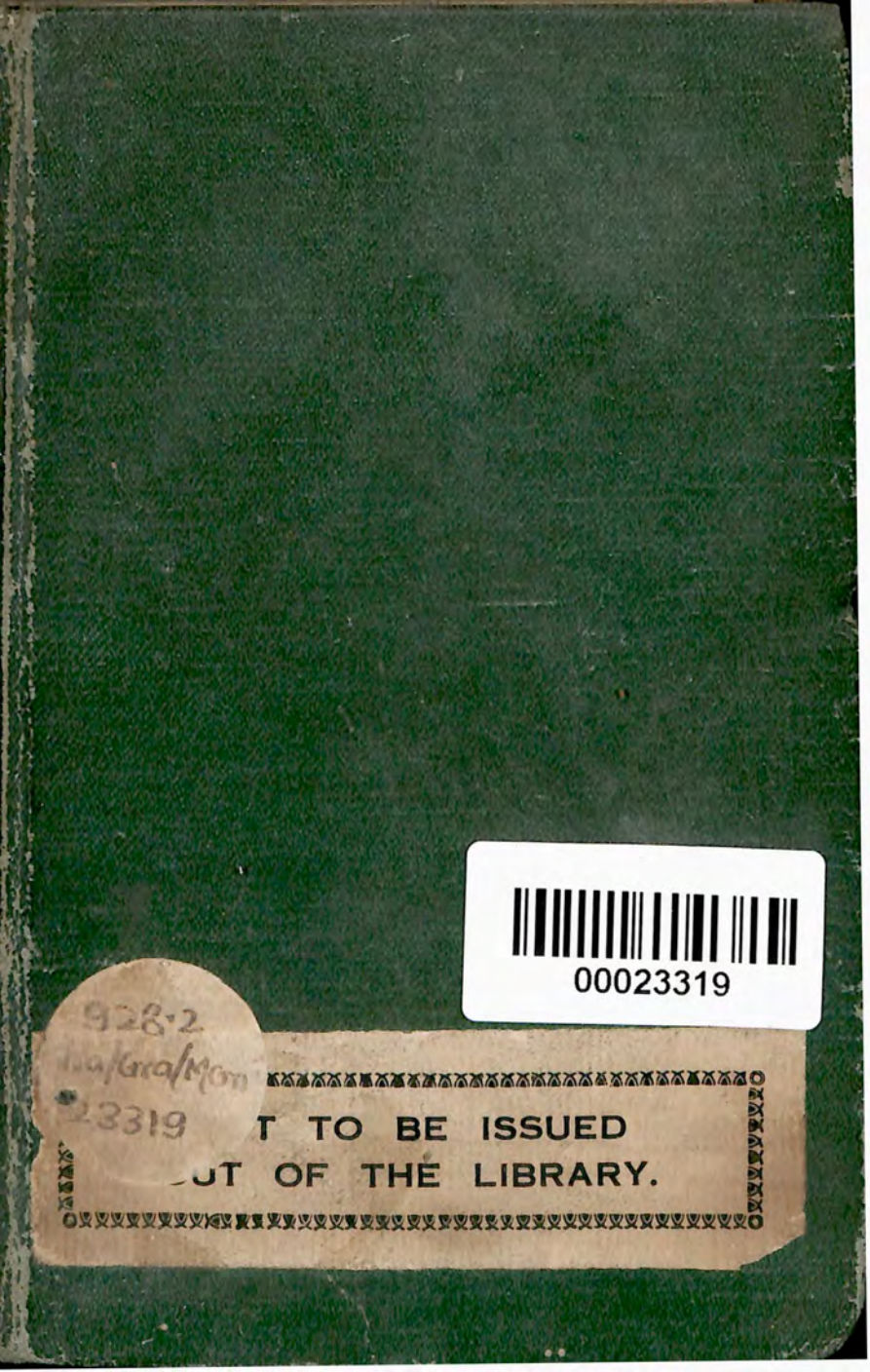
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MEMOIR AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

MRS. GRANT OF LAGGAN.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
Printed by A. SPOTTISWOODE,
New-Street-Square.

MEMOIR AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

MRS. GRANT OF LAGGAN,

AUTHOR OF

"LETTERS FROM THE MOUNTAINS," "MEMOIRS OF AN AMERICAN LADY," ETC.

23319 a.

EDITED BY HER SON,

J. P. GRANT, ESQ.

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

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LETTERS.

LETTER CXXVI.

TO MISS ANNE DUNBAR, LONDON.

Edinburgh, 24th March, 1812.

My dear Bar*,

I AM this morning informed of your great misfortune in the death of your brother; and I do not write to bid you grieve less. Religion, the only sure medicine of hurt minds, is yours; tender and generous feelings for others are also yours, which do not permit the mind to settle in solitary sorrow, while so many others are, as it were, purified by fire in the furnace of affliction. Imagination is also yours—that active faculty mercifully bestowed by a gracious Providence as a counterbalance to the evils arising from too keen sensibility; and—though last, not least—the invaluable privilege of retaining the consoling remembrance that every possible tribute of affection has been paid to the lamented dead. Thus furnished with so many sources of consolation withheld from others,

* "Bar," a familiar abbreviation of Miss Dunbar's name, adopted in the Author's family. See Note to Letter XV.

what, dearest Bar, can I add, but my tender and true sympathy? What motive have I to interrupt the sadness of your so lately wounded spirit, but to give you that consciousness which has soothed myself in the deepest affliction—the knowledge that you are remembered, beloved, and affectionately pitied by the still-attached friends of your early youth.

Would I could but send you my experience. I will not deceive you: that does not warrant me to say that time will cure a wound of this nature; but, in the course of things, one who is under the influence of good principles must, in compliance with these, make exertions for the good of the living, to whom kindness is available: for no Christian worthy of the name dare struggle with the Divine will in a rebellious neglect of the duties of humanity and friendship. The performance of these duties brings its reward with it, in lulling to sleep for a time those sorrows which we think it a kind of virtue, in the first agonies of distress, to cherish. They will frequently awake with quick throbs,—with pangs perhaps nearly as pungent as the first. But, besides the balm that time brings to the afflicted, the secret and soothing reflection that the time of reunion is drawing every day more near is strengthened by age, infirmity, and every thing that is given generously to prepare us for the final change. Dearly indeed I know you loved your brother; but you did not love him *only:* many remain to reap the fruits of that best and truest wisdom which takes root in the wounded and softened heart,—of that affection which grows the fresher for being watered by tears. Yours is not a heart to resist

the tender pleadings of nature and of friendship from those who are born with a claim to your love, and those who have long truly loved you with the love of choice. I do not forbid you to weep: your blessed Saviour felt human affections, and shed human tears. Weep abundantly; but do not sit in solitary musing to cherish what you are required, nay, commanded to resist. Religion must furnish you with motives to endure patiently—not a pretence to cherish wilfully—the suffering that to a mind and a frame so very sensitive as yours would prove fatal were it indulged.

Far am I from supposing that any suffering of your own could render you indifferent to my family or their concerns. I only reserve any intelligence you might wish to have about them for Anne's recital, who will soon be in London, and will give you all her sympathy. Her discourse of early days will steal you from yourself more than any thing else could. You must indeed, my dear friend,

> "Absent you from felicity awhile,
> And in this harsh world draw your breath in pain."

The night is long and dark, but the promise of morning is sure; and the dawn of everlasting day will smile on the sleepers in the tomb as certainly as the morning of those fleeting days does on our limited perceptions. Tell me when you can, that you kindly accept my proffered sympathy, and that you are not selfish nor obstinate in the indulgence of that gloomy luxury which reason as well as religion checks in the excess. So shall you give real satisfaction to your early, sincere and faithful friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXXVII.

TO MISS ANNE DUNBAR, LONDON.

Edinburgh, 30th March, 1812.

My dear Bar,

I was much pleased and relieved by the receipt of your letter; and you must estimate my value for it by my immediate, nay instant, return to its contents. The good sense and piety it manifests are gratifying and soothing to us all; yet the solid depth and oppressive weight of your sorrow is not the less evident from the meekness of your submission to the Divine decree. There are two things as evident to conscience and reflection as the light of day, to which we yet close our eyes with sinful obstinacy: one is, that death is in fact no evil to the righteous who lived a life of preparation, and have a better hope laid up against the day of dissolution; the next, upon which we practise a willing self-deception, is the fleetness, the inconceivable rapidity of the short period of separation. Though dragged towards these powerful motives of consolation by so many forcible arguments, still we linger round the repository of the deserted clay, and think of the departed, not as what they are,—either in a state of blessed rest or exulting in a state of liberty and light,—but as our "frail thoughts, dallying with false surmise," would wish to see them,—pent up in the prison of afflicted clay, and subject to such anguish as we feel, and such bodily suffering as results from that anguish. From this the saddened fancy makes a transition to the darkness in which they are *not* shut up,—the solitude to which they are

not condemned,—and the cold they do *not* feel in the lowly habitation of their untenanted clay cottage. All this I speak of experimentally, for on all this my fancy has dwelt with mournful perseverance, when both faith and reason joined their testimony to the healing and consoling truth. But this dwelling below the moon, these fond and fruitless recurrences to the past, and the averting of our eyes from the clear vision of futurity, is a part of our weakness which is wisely permitted to clog our aspiration after better things, while ordained to remain in this land of shadows: were it otherwise, the duties, the friendships, the enjoyments, which are afforded as cordials in the thorny path assigned to us, would all become tasteless and burdensome, while we, with weak and unequal wing, were expatiating on the confines of that world which is veiled from us, and hovering about that gate of which "strong Death alone can heave the massy bar."

I lament that the dew that is so refreshing to the dried-up heart is withheld from you. But you will weep, my dear Bar, you will weep abundantly, when you return to that home where alone you will find full sympathy in your natural sorrows. The grief of those who most intimately share your loss will then unlock every source of tenderness: your sorrow will no longer be of this chilling nature; it will be soft and social, and seek for itself those vents that will diminish what they cannot remove.

Write to me for the relief of your own mind; it will occupy you, and induce exertion. We all join in warm sympathy and love to you, which you

ought to know to be far beyond common attachment, knowing so well as you do your early and faithful friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXXVIII.

TO MR. JOHN HENNING, ARTIST, LONDON.

My dear Henning, Edinburgh, 25th April, 1812.

I have to request that you will receive with all gratitude, and without the smallest resentment, whatever civility is offered you by the Tragic Queen, and rest assured that she did not, in the smallest degree, injure a hair of your head, while in Edinburgh, but, on the contrary, spoke kindly and respectfully of you. If you have anything to fear in the way of ill will, it must be from your fellow-artists: knowing what I do know of human malignity and envy, I should be much surprised if that were not the case. To go on in a prosperous course, with any degree of public celebrity, without awaking envy is impossible. Surely you must remember what Pope says of the fate of authors, doomed as they are to be "envied wretched, and be flattered poor." People that live in and for the world wholly are as like each other as peas; they all put on the same colour, and wear the same varnish: their real character, if such exists, is not easily discernible. The children of this world

being, after their generation, wiser than the children of light, they neither much please nor offend: self-interest teaches them to take their cautious grounded path, which they safely pursue where profit leads, without exciting love or hatred. On the other hand, people who have lived long enough in retirement to have formed a decided character of their own, to act from feeling and speak from impulse, and walk about without a mask, — such persons are considered by mere worldlings as simpletons, whose want of address and management disqualifies them from making their way; and they are, above all things, enraged when they see untaught talents and unfashioned virtues attract that admiration for which they vainly languish, or excite that esteem of which they feel themselves unworthy. If you really are deprived of the honour of modelling the Princess Charlotte, you certainly owe it to that same artist you refer to. You owe, however, something to your own credit and interest; and one must be occasionally both flexible and firm to counteract the intriguing management by which princes are always surrounded. If I had hold of your collar just now, I would shake it to punish you for being so very easily hurt. Much, much must you encounter of this nature, if you are as prosperous, and as much esteemed as I trust you will be.

You have told very prettily the little conversation betwixt Lady Wellington and yourself: it had for us no small interest. I suppose what you see of her, and others of those people of rank most disposed to favour you, will cure you of the vulgar prejudice, if

such you have ever harboured, that virtue can only flourish in the vale. The vices of people on an eminence must needs be conspicuous; but they may do their duty all the year round without any one's taking the least notice of it. I was sure you would like the Morritts of Rokeby very much; they are excellent people: Mr. Morritt himself has a warmth of heart and frankness of manners not often met with beyond the Tweed, at least in such a visible way. Pray write very soon, and accept the warm good wishes of the family here, along with those of yours most cordially,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXXIX.

TO MISS ANNE DUNBAR, GARROWSTRIPE, NAIRN.

Edinburgh, 11th May, 1812.

My dear Bar,

There is no person on earth in whom the indulgence of grief would be more faulty than in you: first, because your frame and nerves are not adequate to bear it; second, because you are the only remaining comfort — the thread that ties to life your venerable parents; and lastly, that the sting of death has been extracted for him you mourn.

I wish I were near enough to send you a volume of Paley's Sermons which I have here; it concludes with one upon the recognition of our friends in a blessed futurity, and another on the Resurrection of

the Just. The true consolation is the very short period of separation: if we do but seriously think "how fast the shuttle flies that weaves our shroud," the distance betwixt our departure and that of those we deplore sinks to nothing: I do not much wonder, in the depressed state of your disinterested mind, that you should feel the enjoyment of the fruits of your brother's labours as an aggravation of your loss. Think, however, how consoling it would be to him that he did not leave you dependant, — that he had been labouring for those he loved best on earth, and that what is now nothing to him is something to you. It is ungrateful to Providence, and therefore sinful, to take a wayward view of what is wisely and well ordered. Your too sensitive frame, and your most clamant duties make that luxury of grief, which is the indulgence of the mourner, pernicious and unsafe to you. This is not the jargon of hackneyed consolation, but truth founded on a thorough knowledge of your frame of mind and constitution. Court the fresh breeze, and look with complacence on lovely nature in all its opening graces; there you will find a balm that will soothe what it cannot heal. I know you to be more than commonly awake to rural charms; they are indeed at short intervals able to soothe all sadness but despair. The murmur of a rude Highland stream did me more good than volumes of philosophy, at a time when my heart was like to burst: the face of unadorned and undisguised nature is a fair reflection of divine beauty and beneficence; it breathes a holy calm even into the breast of recent anguish. Your brother, you have room to hope,

looks down upon you as a guardian: be you then as a ministering spirit to his parents and your own. Adieu, dear Bar.; tell me how nobly you exert yourself, and give pleasure to yours truly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXXX.

TO MRS. HOOK, MIRABLES, ISLE OF WIGHT.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 10th June, 1812.

I had the pleasure of receiving your affectionate letter, and am prompted by the faithful transcript of your vivid feelings to answer it immediately; for I always like to write to you while my heart is warm with the first impressions of your letters.

What can I, alas, add to what you have so truly and so affectingly said of Mr. Perceval?* How blest is a death to the individual so instantaneous, so free from pain, from apprehension, from the pangs of parting with all that is dear on earth, and trembling, as the best must tremble, at appearing before Him whose eyes are too pure to behold iniquity! Dreadful indeed to the witnesses and survivors: but, how short and easy the transition to everlasting peace and unfading joy to him whose life was one continued preparation, — to whom the fatal weapon of the assassin was only the key that opened the gates of a blissful eternity.

* The recent assassination of Mr. Perceval in the lobby of the House of Commons is alluded to.

This is the glory, the triumph of vital Christianity: events the most adverse, the most terrible to those whose hope is only in this world, come to them divested of terror; and not only really are, but are felt to be blessings in disguise.

I am much pleased to find my opinions on the subjects discussed in my last letter meet your approbation: had your worldly affairs been exactly as I would wish them to be, I might have loved you as well, but I am sure I could not have esteemed or admired you nearly as much as I do; nor indeed could Dr. Hook. We might have thought you gold before, but now we certainly know you to be gold purified and refined from the dross of worldly mixture. I could not, indeed, with the least delicacy, say how much you have risen in my eyes since this nobly supported trial. Our trials here, in all states and circumstances, are indeed most arduous; the more so, that our virtues, our finest qualities and fairest embellishments, all border nearly on something dangerous, that is carefully to be avoided. What, for instance, can more delight and engage than your open-hearted generosity, so totally free from every leaven of vanity, or your beloved friend's fine taste, so allied to genius, and to the refinement of elegant sentiment? Yet, in these there is danger; and, had you not both been restricted by the strong hand of necessity, there is no saying whither these dangerous charms might lead you. I could not be forgiven the indelicacy of recurring to this subject if it were not very near my heart, — if I did not feel it very differently from what the minions of prosperous fortune,

on whom no chill blast has ever blown, can do. A certain proportion even of pride and vanity is good for us, otherwise it would not have made a part of our composition: the thing is not to extinguish, but to direct it aright. Before I dismiss this subject I must speak of the pride and vanity which you have infused into one of the most artless of human bosoms, and one the least susceptible of these passions that I have ever known: I mean Anne, who is so proud and so happy in the thoughts of seeing you at Mirables, that a disappointment would be killing to her. You can hardly know, and it would not become me to tell you, into how pure and good a mind you are pouring all this delight. Enough of Anne.

Your son Walter's letter amused me much. If I do not recant my heresies regarding Charles the Twelfth, I fear I shall share the fate of Coriolanus, who feared that "boys and girls would slay him in puny battle." I shall, however, wash my hands in innocence, and write an exculpatory epistle to appease Walter's righteous wrath. Write soon, dearest friend, to your entirely affectionate and attached,

ANNE GRANT.

Letter CXXXI.

TO MR. JOHN HENNING, ARTIST, LONDON.

Edinburgh, 20th June, 1812.

My dear Henning,

I am glad that you are likely to procure us a resemblance of the Princess Charlotte, whom we all look forward to as one who is to add to the wisdom, fortitude, and dignity of Elizabeth the milder graces and gentler qualities of her more amiable, though less fortunate rival. When I call the unhappy though highly-gifted Mary unfortunate, I do not merely advert to the loss of her crown and life; that of her honour, the eternal blot on her fame, is much more to be lamented. The difference in the fate of those rival queens began early. Elizabeth was educated in the wholesome school of adversity, and there, by learning to govern herself, was fitted to govern others. Mary, in the midst of a voluptuous court, early taught to consider herself as wielding a double sceptre, learnt also, too soon, that she was qualified to dazzle every eye and captivate every heart; so that the queen was too soon lost in the woman, too charming and too easily charmed. It was in the gloom of adversity, in prison, and on the scaffold, that her nobler qualities broke forth. The epigram on Otho might be applied to them: one might say of Elizabeth, —

"That she was greater living, none deny,
But say, than Mary did she greater die?"

To that boundless mercy which her dying words supplicated we shall leave her.

You are certainly right to tell the Princess Charlotte what you think on any subject on which she condescends to question you: the conversation of one who is so entirely a man of nature as yourself, and the plain and harmless sincerity so obvious in all you say and do, must be to her an amusing novelty. You must, however, with the civility usual, and indeed proper, even among equals, mention your views of these subjects merely as opinions, not as dogmas. I am in no pain for your behaviour before a princess of an uncorrupted mind: your native benevolence and general good feeling will so far stand you in the stead of polish, that you will never say any thing, knowingly, harsh and offensive to the feelings of others. As for the little fancies and eccentricities of a mind awake, excursive, and unsubdued to the standard of modes, they must please where they are comprehended. It augurs well of our young Princess to listen with patient attention to discourse so artless as yours. I fear she meets few so undesigning.

Your sister is in the prettiest, neatest house imaginable, and keeps it very nice; everything about her looks like good regulation. We rejoice over your new coat: dress you yourself, and we shall dress your children. My second sight assures me you will do well; but if you always look back, who knows but you may turn to a pillar of plaster-of-Paris, or some such thing: look forward, and above all, look to God. Adieu, dear Henning; pray write soon to me, and tell

me all that concerns you: don't be afraid of me, I am kindest when most clamorous: say of me as Lord Byron says of nature, "I loved thee still, and loved thee best in wrath." I am, with severe fidelity, your unaltered friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXXXII.

TO MR. JOHN HENNING.

Edinburgh, 24th July, 1812.

I am glad, dear Henning, that in your last distressing letter you have showed me the bottom of your wound, that, as sympathy and experience can direct me, I may search and peradventure heal it.

Before I touch upon the disease of your mind I must alleviate your present anxiety by informing you that I shall provide, to a certain extent, for the immediate occasions of your sister and your children. I am sure you know I would have much more pleasure in giving than lending, if I could, in justice to others, spare it: as it is, however, it is less painful to your feelings, and touches not on your independence.

Always think of me as a person who has felt all that you feel, and suffered all that you suffer,—all privations of heart, of circumstances, and of accustomed scenes. Your children live; so do not mine: half only remain of the fair and hopeful flowers that bloomed

around me. How many of these were torn from my bosom under the most aggravating circumstances, in the full bloom of uncommon beauty, and almost in the maturity of talents and virtues that might fill a mother's proudest hopes! All this I felt as much as I could feel anything after the loss of their amiable and worthy father, whose tenderness and attachment to me were beyond all description. All this I have deeply, bitterly felt; yet all this I have outlived, because I never permitted my mind to dwell on the past, further than as a spur to perform my active duties to the beloved children, the brothers and sisters of so much departed excellence. The God in whom I trusted has blessed my endeavours; and here am I, after all my struggles, offering to you that comfort which in a few years, by similar exertions and self-government, you may have it in your power to offer to others.

I wish to undeceive you: indulging, in dreary and sinfully hopeless solitude, the feeling of a wounded heart and the reveries of an ardent and ungoverned imagination, you injure, greatly injure the nerves, "those tender strings of life," as the poet justly calls them: and this morbid state of your nervous system you mistake for an excess of paternal affection, and imagine if you possessed these absent blessings you would be happy. Were you happy when you did possess them? Could the possession of them in your present circumstances add to your happiness or theirs? Not so, surely. You are combating a shadow which you mistake for a substance: past misfortunes are so deeply fixed on the retina of your imagination, that

you mistake them for present. Not satisfied with this competent stock of past evils to brood over, you sit very devoutly and composedly down to hatch future ones; and amidst princes and nobles, whose resemblance your art has been called forth to perpetuate, and who encourage and applaud, you turn away your eyes from the gay visions of prosperity to encounter the spectres of shame and poverty which your wayward fancy creates. Be a man, be a Christian; drive away these gloomy day-dreams, and in humble trust implore the Sun of Righteousness to arise with healing on his wings, and to scatter these illusions. I do not make light of your distress: I have experienced both the reality and the still severer pangs inflicted by the gloomy shadows reflected from it on the torn and agitated mind. It is amusement that you want. Pray do read Lord Byron's poems, that you may see the evils of abused prosperity and perverted genius, and be thankful that yours was not the harder trial of prosperity. His powers are very great; and through the gloom of his principles and feelings he does not appear "less than Archangel ruined."

Now, if you value my letters, you'll answer this directly; and I shall contrive to make my next a very amusing one, for it is amusement that you want. Don't burn my letters, but when you are gloomy read them over: what comes from the heart must necessarily go to the heart. I am, your unwearied and unaltered friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXXXIII.

TO MRS. L—, CLIFTON, BRISTOL.

Hatton, an old seat of Lord Lauderdale's, near Edinburgh,
16th August, 1812.

My dear Madam,

I must begin by telling where I am before proceeding to other matters. I am in a fine antique dwelling, which the noble owner sold some years ago, to build a new residence at the end of the little borough of Dunbar. It is at present inhabited by an association betwixt the Moreheads and Jeffreys, who have taken a lease of it; and to Mr. and Mrs. Morehead Mary and I are upon a visit. Had I not store of more interesting matter to tell you, I might describe with some effect the romantic ideas suggested by the old towers, long galleries, still longer passages, and endless labyrinth of rooms, not half of which are inhabited, in this once dignified and spacious edifice, part of which is now taken down to render the rest more compact, while enough remains to bewilder and astonish such a visitor as I am.

You will not hear with indifference that we have lost our dear Isabella Loudon, whose beauty, innocent gaiety, and artless originality, made her so much the object of pride and attachment to those most nearly connected with her. Never was any human being more fondly beloved and more deeply deplored; yet her sisters, who absolutely made an idol of her, have too much piety and good sense to refuse consolation: they rather dwell with fond enthusiasm on the divine hope, or, more properly, ardent faith, that lighted

her way to the tomb, and seemed to her to divest death of its terrors. She had never seen the look of unkindness, nor heard the harshness of reproof: this could not, from the nature of her prospects, have continued, and any diminution of it would have been misery. As it is, I trust the mode in which it pleased God to make her happy is only changed and exalted.

I should have told you of two young ladies who have lately been placed under my care. The first is the grand-daughter of the late excellent Sir James Grant of Grant: her mother was his daughter, her father a General Stewart, now in the East Indies: she is fourteen; pretty, artless, and very engaging in her modest simplicity, though very little informed, having lived chiefly with a very old grand-aunt, who only taught her to be very good and very neat. She is, however, an excellent subject; and I am better pleased than I should be if her head was crammed with crude pretensions. The other is a daughter of Mr. Erskine of Mar, who represents the first Earl but two in Scotland, and preserves, though not the title, the estate belonging to that earldom: she appears naturally good-tempered and amiable; and I hope much good of her in time, for I see she has a heart.

A beam of joy from India has illumined us lately, from the arrival of a Colonel Hay, one of my son's best friends at Bombay. The Colonel, who is a calm, worthy, and sensible man, has brought us the best accounts of his character and conduct. He says my son has no expensive turn of any kind, and that he is much beloved among all his fellow-officers; that nothing can be more judicious than his conduct, except-

ing in regard to generosity to his young countrymen, who come over poor and bare as he was himself on his first arrival. That, however, is a thing that time and experience (perhaps too soon) cure: and such of them as live and thrive will in time repay him.

You did not see, but you heard much, when in Edinburgh, of Mrs. Apreece; she is married to the celebrated Sir Humphrey Davy, who is considered to be the first chemist in Europe. Sir Humphrey and the new Lady Davy are now in Scotland; they are making the tour of the Highlands, and passed rapidly through Edinburgh. I spent an evening, however, with them at Mrs. Mackenzie's. I admire the chemist much, think him very natural and very amusing. She, like the generality of people who live much in and for the world, looks older than she is, and he much younger; they are, however, about the same age.

I will say nothing of peace or war; it is a theme too large and too sad for me to grasp at present: but I have not done hoping. We are all in the most painful suspense about a rumoured victory in Spain, which is not yet confirmed. Farewell, my dear Mrs. L. I am, with great esteem and sincerity, most truly yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXXXIV.

TO MR. JOHN HENNING, ARTIST, LONDON.

Edinburgh, 17th September, 1812.

My dear Henning,

I have two letters to thank you for, which have successively given me great pleasure, not merely as conveying probable room to ground hopes of success, but, what is of still more consequence, a hope of dispelling that mist of the mind that dims the future good, and exaggerates the phantom of approaching evil. Besides the acute sensations, which are the tax that genius pays for its superior enjoyments, there is a certain vulgar disease, known by a vulgar name, which preys secretly on the vitals of such—precisely such people as you and I; it is called, in plebeian phraseology, the Guinea-fever,—and a tormenting fever I have found it. When the purse is at a low ebb, and the family wants are manifold, it is continued and acute,—one's pulse and breathing are affected by it. When casual supplies bring temporary relief, it is intermitting; and, even in a perfectly sane interval, the presenting of an account renews the symptoms. To what account should a well-regulated mind, accustomed to repose with firm trust on the divine beneficence, turn all this? Certainly to gratitude for the opening prospects that promise to relieve too sensitive minds from so great an evil, and to administer to future days the delightful cordial of independence.

I am much pleased that you have your friend Mr. Carse for an associate. Quiet, familiar society is what the wounded mind and exhausted heart

require: conversation, that costs no effort, and tends to bring up softened images of the past, and bright anticipations of the future — even the eternal future — is the cordial of life; and such conversation one can only hold with those who look back on similar scenes, and anticipate similar prospects with ourselves.

I am delighted to hear that you keep your ground with the Princesses, and that admirable, and, what is better, valuable woman, Lady —— ——. They of themselves will float you in time, if you keep good heart and firm reliance on the Hand that, for wise purposes, has placed you in that furnace where gold is purified and dross consumed. Look at the rich, and see how many of them are happier. You shall soon hear from me again: meantime, farewell heartily,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXXXV.

TO MRS. BROWN, ST. VINCENT STREET, GLASGOW.

My dear Mrs. Brown, Edinburgh, 19th November, 1812.

I think it is time for one of the oldest and sincerest of your friends to welcome you to the new house that is described to me as so pleasant and commodious a dwelling. I hope, in return, you will at some future period welcome me to it; but I do not see any immediate likelihood thereof. Perhaps it is time for my long-agitated and storm-beaten vessel to

come to an anchor, and prepare for its final breaking up. Perhaps, again, I might be the better for a little to revisit scenes of early existence, in which live so many cherished recollections. Be that as it may, my present engagements do not admit of this kind of indulgence, and seem daily becoming more serious. I make apologies with as much gravity as if I thought my presence necessary, or my absence a privation.

I think I need scarcely tell you how glad we all were to see your son Robert, or how willing we are to give him credit for all the gentle virtues that are indicated by his countenance and manners. You cannot easily think what a kindred-like fondness I feel for every one of your children, and your sister's, when I see them here, more especially when I think of them as the representatives of their parents. I grudge excessively your son seeing our fine city in such an unseemly disguise as the thick mists and bad weather threw over it while he was here. — Edinburgh being the heart and crown of our dear native country, I am quite sorry when it is not seen to advantage by those to whom it is a novelty. I feel much remaining kindness, however, for that locality in which Glasgow differs most from Edinburgh, — I mean in the language and manners of the inhabitants. Not that I think them better; far otherwise. But Glasgow is far more Caledonian, more national than Edinburgh; and our spoken nationality decays so fast, that I feel a kind of pain at its departure, and greet any of its appearance as one does a worthy plain relation, whom habit and the force of blood make us prefer to a newly-

acquired though more accomplished friend. One high pre-eminence, however, that Edinburgh holds above other towns, and more particularly above London, is the liberal style of conversation. All the persons most distinguished and admired here speak with a degree of respect and kindness of each other,—no petty animosities nor invidious diminutions, even though differing much on political or other subjects. Then, there is no scandal, no discussion of people's private affairs or circumstances to be met with in what is accredited as good society; and the consciousness that the little ill-natured anecdotes of private life will not be accepted as conversation, makes people exert themselves to inform their minds, and elevate the tone of their general conduct and discourse to something at least rational. Now, in England, people in middle life are constantly talking of their superiors, and talking so very much of them, that, as Johnson says of Shakspeare who "exhausted worlds and then imagined new," they exhaust their follies and vices, and then imagine new ones. This style of conversation is, of all the styles I have met with, the most contemptible.

Our young ladies have seven wise masters attending them for as many branches of polite and useful sciences. Mary entirely dedicates herself to these fair ones, who, of course, are to add high polish to great solidity. By what connexion can this lead me to the Countess and Gertrude? Read it carefully: they will tell you it is dry at first, and long throughout. The first volume you will find sterile of incident, and full of dry gossip,—I mean the first half of it: but

go on; you are not reading a common novel,—you are not gathering flowers on the surface, fair as transient: you are digging a mine, and must work long and leisurely to be richly rewarded, though dross be mixed, in some instances, with the precious metal. One need not read this book in a week, or a month; the leisure hours of a summer would be well bestowed on it.

I must now bid you adieu most affectionately, being, with real esteem, yours always,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXXXVI.

TO MRS. ——, NEW ENGLAND, AMERICA.

Edinburgh, 3d December, 1812.

My dear Madam,

It would not be easy to say what joy your most satisfactory letter spread through this family, to think that a heart like yours, after all its weary wanderings and anxious fears, should at length repose amidst so many cordial friends, doubly endeared by absence. I am quite of your opinion, that, among the vast variety of blessings with which the Almighty has adorned the dwellings of his creatures, each most values those endeared by early associations. The harbour of Boston, I really believe, does not owe all its charms to your partiality; I have heard of its beauties from others: if it equals that of New York, of which a lively picture still exists in my memory, it must be very fine indeed. I hope that the remembrance of what and whom you have seen in your

travels will not only afford a present source of amusing communication to your friends, but a various and instructive fund for reflection. "What can we reason but from what we know?" Travelling does not by any means produce wisdom, but it certainly affords it materials wherewith to work; and our soundest conclusions with regard to mere worldly matters are drawn from comparison.

Soon after writing to you last, Miss Glassell went with Mary and myself to spend a week with the family of her guardian, Mr. Cathcart, whose pleasant seat of Drum lies five miles south of Edinburgh; and whose public and private virtues made him generally beloved and esteemed. If I were not limited for time, I should delight to dwell on the merit and felicity of this excellent family, and particularly on that modest yet fervent piety and great benevolence which made the world forgive rapid and great prosperity, and behold it without a shade of envy or detraction. After our return from Drum no variety occurred till I went to Rosebank, accompanied by my daughter Moore. There, with the pleasing and truly good family of the Millars, we enjoyed every rural charm that bright harvest weather, amidst delightful scenery, could afford without, and pleasant and instructive society within. You must observe that Rosebank is the nearest house to Roslyn Castle, and to "Dryden's groves of oak," and within a mile of "classic Hawthornden." We returned to town just before the general election, one of the results of which, the death of Mr. Cathcart*, in consequence of

* The late Robert Cathcart, Esq., of Drum, Writer to the Signet.

fatigue and cold in the course of professional duties connected with that period, has thrown a gloom over us all, and deprived society, not only of a useful and amiable, but of a bright example of every Christian virtue, and every sweet endearing social quality. When the Duchess of ——, who filled the stage of life with glare and turbulence, left the scene she had so much animated, there seemed to be scarcely a look cast after her: I never saw a grave so early and completely covered with the veil of oblivion. Now when this gentle star that silently shed sweet influence on its path, has thus suddenly declined, the public concern is beyond what you can imagine.

I was glad to hear of Mrs. ——'s fortitude and brighter prospects. I, who have trod the roughest paths of adversity, am better qualified to estimate its results than wiser people, who have not made that sad pilgrimage; and I am convinced that, if borne with resignation and perfect confidence in the Divine aid, there is much to be learned and much to be discovered in that gloomy region. We shall, in particular, discover powers in our own minds which, in happier times, we never should have imagined ourselves to possess, and heroic virtue and attachment in some of our friends for which we should never have given them credit. The severe reverses in the commercial world of late have occasioned much distress in Scotland; but the promising aspect of public affairs is a cordial even to private sufferings: and we may indulge the hope that peace will be the result of the late mighty events in Russia, in which "the stars in their courses fought against," and the elements were armed against the foes of human kind, forming

a happy conclusion to this dreadful scene of retribution, in which the nations of the earth have been purified by fire; and we, evanescent creatures of a day as we are, may yet see the opening of that grand period so long and surely foretold, when "Righteousness and peace shall kiss each other, and the knowledge of the Lord cover the face of the earth, as the waters cover the face of the sea." With affectionate regards to all your family, I am, my dear friend, most affectionately yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXXXVII.

MRS. SMITH, OF JORDANHILL, GLASGOW.

Edinburgh, 16th April, 1813.

My dear Friend,

Your namesake, Miss Isabella Smythe, for whom you inquire, is as present with us as it is possible for one so divided to be: twice a week one or other of her correspondents in this house has a long letter from her from Ireland, in which her spotless heart and innocent life lies as open to our view as though she still lived with us. She is in great health and spirits, and much engaged in teaching a class of poor children to read. I understand the spirit of improvement and this mode of charitable instruction are very prevalent in their neighbourhood; and am pleased with the many instances that she tells us of, that indicate the sublimest and most active charity, and that among the young, the lovely, and the elegant.

You ask me to tell you what I think of Rokeby. I think, in the first place, that it is the Border Minstrel's Odyssey; that is to say, there is in it a higher tone of morality, though less of the glow and rapidity of inspiration that hurried you along in his former productions. The descriptions are beautiful, and correctly true to nature; for you know that I, having traced all the scenes under the conduct of their enthusiastic owner, can judge pretty accurately of the resemblance. Mr. Moritt, who is himself a poet, looks on the Tees and the Greta with a lover's eye, and delights in pointing out the beauties of the valleys through which they wander. There cannot, however, be a more powerful illustration of Mr. Jeffrey's theory, of the necessary connexion between scenery and sentiment to give inanimate beauty its full effect, than the comparatively feeble impression left on the mind by description so fine in itself and so true to its original, for want of those legends and poetical associations by which our Scottish glens and mountains are not only consecrated, but in a degree animated. Observe how rich the notes of Scott's former poems are in allusions to traditions and quotations from local poetry! But where is the local poetry of England? Granville and Pope, of very late years, have celebrated Windsor and the Thames; our own countryman Thomson, too, hung a wreath on Richmond Hill: but what other place in England can be mentioned that wakes one poetical recollection? Milton's very self has not sanctified a single spot; and Spencer's localities were all in Ireland.

I have been thus prolix from the honest motive of

amusing you; and shall take it very much amiss if you think I am at perfect leisure, and merely scribbling to amuse myself. Commend me kindly to the gentlemen of your family, and believe me, ever truly yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXXXVIII.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Edinburgh, 13th May, 1813.

My dear Friend,

I have numberless epistolary debts unpaid, and my mind, after all the late anxiety respecting Mary's health, cannot be expected to overflow with cheerfulness. Yet my heart turns to you incessantly, and I feel a greater wish to write to you than to any one, merely because I think a letter from me more likely to break on the cheerless gloom that hangs over subsiding sorrow than that of almost any other person. This you will not censure as presumption, because I attribute it very much to the power of long habit: we have been so accustomed to consider each other's letters as "seals of love *not* sealed in vain," and to expect from them the renewal of wonted feelings, such as rarely outlive the prime of life, that, whatever they contain, they always touch some accordant string of social harmony. That is a very young period, but you know it is only between you and me.

I am on all sides complimented on Anne's improvement in looks and manners since her return from

England. I, for my part, am much more pleased with what she has retained than with what she has acquired,—I mean that candid simplicity and cheerful benevolence which always gave joy to her heart, and light to her countenance.

Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton has sent me a copy of her new work*: you must have seen its long title in the papers. The Essays, as far as I have proceeded, appear to me excellent; I only regret that there is not more attraction in the style. Good books are generally read most by those who least need them: one could wish that there were some charms in the diction of so valuable a treatise. Bishop Sandford, who I really think is a Christian of vital piety, thinks highly of them.

Anne has brought home a book which adds to perfect orthodoxy the desirable power of rivetting attention: it is Hannah More's last work—"Christian Morals," of which some think the style too brilliant and pointed. Not so I;—I have no objection to hear the notes of salvation sounded through a silver trumpet. . . . . Tell me how you all go on; and believe me, with truth and affection, dear friend, yours most sincerely,

ANNE GRANT.

* Essays on the Improvement of the Understanding, the Imagination, and the Heart.

LETTER CXXXIX.

TO MRS. ——, NEW ENGLAND, AMERICA.

My dear Madam, Edinburgh, 23d May, 1813.

Your affectionate and truly pleasant letter broke forth like a rainbow through the cloud of anxious sorrows with which I have been for some time covered; neither was there, nor should any other cause have prevented me from writing, had I not been unwilling at this great distance to furnish you with a subject of anxiety, which it might be months before I could remove. You will be concerned to hear that my dear Mary had last spring an alarming bilious fever, which continued long and was succeeded by various relapses; and of the languor and depression which followed it she is not yet entirely freed. Her health is now in a great measure restored, but her spirits have not recovered their wonted cheerfulness. I have great cause to be thankful for the manner in which my own health has been continued to me in a state of the most painful anxiety. We had here the most beautiful March ever remembered, adorned with primroses and violets like the beginning of May. By the doctor's directions, we took lodgings for Mary very near Lord Dalhousie's Castle on the Esk, and the family being from home, we had free access to the walks and gardens of that delightful abode, which proved of great advantage to our invalid.

I could write pages of Henning the artist's adventures in London, and his finally successful struggles. His would be a curious history. My friend Miss

Stewart got him into the favour and employment of the Princess of Wales and of the Princess Charlotte. The latter, who is a fine creature, with much original mind and great strength of character, took a great fancy to poor Henning's conversation. He is getting in fashion as an artist; and the peculiarities of his character begin to be understood. I have had all this time an anxious superintendence of his fine family of children, who lived here under the care of a modest, sensible aunt. Long and wondrous would be the detail; but by the favour of that merciful God, who never forsakes those that trust in him, all obstacles have been at length surmounted; and this day fortnight I sent off his children and sister to London, where he has now a comfortable dwelling to receive them in, and comfortable prospects before him.

All the friends we mutually know here go on in the usual way. I see Dr. Thomas Brown now and then, who is as witty, amusing, and metaphysical, and as good a son and brother, as ever. Dr. Ritchie of the High Church even excels himself; but time begins to lay a heavy hand on him, and we grieve to see how fast he ripens for immortality. I am, my dear friend, affectionately yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXL.

TO MRS. BROWN, ST. VINCENT STREET, GLASGOW.

My dear Mrs. Brown, Edinburgh, 13th October, 1813.

I have for some time required comfort too much myself to be a good comforter; but when the heart is softened by affliction it is ready to overflow with sympathy. I remember too well what I suffered nearly ten years ago, when my own son left me in London to sail for India, to think that you can be easy on the departure of yours, however much you may wish to appear so. In London, the cure for the heartache is always found, or at least sought, in the theatre. I went into the city, and, at the house of a relation, bid farewell to my son about eleven at night, — he being to set out the next morning in the Portsmouth coach. How I passed that night I will not say. My three comforters, Mrs. Malliet, her daughter, and Mrs. Furzer, were not much better than Job's; of each I might have truly said, "She speaks to me who never had a son." I did not, you may believe, make much display of my sorrow to these son-less persons. But, after making me understand my own felicity, in being quit of the expense of supporting my son in London, they laid their heads together to comfort me, next evening, by carrying me to see an excellent comedy. This project was concealed till a little before its execution: to remonstrate would be incurring the imputed guilt of romance and affectation. Why should I not be comforted in the same manner that others, in a like state, were solaced? Had they waited for

the enacting of "The Distressed Mother," it would have been something. But there was I, in the agony of an excruciating headache, marched off with my three friends to Drury Lane. Mrs. Malliet could not endure to be left behind when any thing in the shape of amusement was going on: she was eighty-four at least, and very nearly as deaf as a post, for which cogent reason she was placed in the first row of the pit for the advantage of hearing and seeing; and we who were younger, and not deaf, must needs sit there too, where the lights glared in my poor eyes, and the music grated on my reluctant ears, and tortured my miserable head, the whole evening. Thus was I comforted in London!

How very differently will you be comforted in Glasgow. I am sure if I were with you quietly, with my mind at ease for a few days, I could amuse you with many of my adventures in England which remain untold. I think, in the mean time, one of your best amusements must be seeing the mild weather and moderate winds, which are carrying your son onwards to his destination without apparent danger. Another thing would amuse and please you, and that is, the high favour which Frank found in the eyes of all our maidens, who pronounce him to be a charming boy, gentle and modest, yet frank enough to provoke one to pun, and evidently kind-hearted.

It is but sorry comfort to think of other people's distress to moderate our own, yet it really has sometimes that effect, from the workings of humanity which carry us out of ourselves, and divert the mind to other sorrows, — dividing at least the current of

thought. The afflicted and truly affectionate family of the Thomsons are on all accounts greatly to be pitied; besides the very great loss they sustain of their son-in-law Mr. Starke, an anxious burden is likely to devolve upon them, in the charge of his family. We all join in affectionate regards to you and your very good boys. I am, with warmth and truth, your affectionate friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXLI.

TO MRS. SMITH, OF JORDANHILL, GLASGOW.

Edinburgh, first day of the year 1814.

My very dear Friend,

I wished to keep up the old custom of writing to you on this day, to repeat more solemnly the assurance of that friendship and gratitude to which every year adds new links. Of what I owe you on Mary's account, during her late illness, I say little: first, because there is so much to be said; and next, because I know your regard for her makes the pleasure of doing good an ample reward for your tender and considerate exertions.

I have dismissed my cold, and have at present no other illness but that of being sick of Madame de Stael, from whose ubiquity there is no escaping. She appears to fill every place, and the mania regarding her seems epidemical. What fatigues *me* to death from its superabundance might amuse you

in your retirement: I am therefore tempted to enclose Mrs. Hook's panegyric. I consider Madame de Stael's Delphine a very bad book; and I should be apt to insist on the author doing penance like Jane Shore, in a white sheet at St. Paul's, before I would forgive her for writing it. All this I say to qualify the enclosed eulogy, and to assert my decided principle, that there is much danger in allowing talent to atone for dangerous opinions.

I think the Bride of Abydos, as every bride should be — very beautiful; but the unrivalled Giaour is still more so. Now, as I cannot say anything nearly so good myself, I shall conclude by quoting a letter I lately received from my friend Miss ——, on the subject of Lord Byron and De Stael. "Madame de Stael entered at one door of the London Theatre just as the Edgeworths exited at the other: I too was exiting, but just contrived to get one sight of her, worth a dozen of common ones; I need not say contrived, for the D——s kindly pressed me to meet her at their house, the day after her arrival; and as the only guest besides was Lord Byron, and as they drew each other forth in perfection, I never listened to a dialogue so thoroughly entertaining. The present sentiments, political and religious, of Childe Harold and Madame de Stael are as completely in contrast as her torrent of eloquence and his cold sarcastic wit. By the way, he is going, I am told, to produce to the world another poem, full of his favourite terrors. Have you ever chanced to meet with Lord Byron? It is a delight to me when I see a distinguished mind so characteristically

lodged. The beautiful form of his head, and the singularly evil and desponding expression of his features, give at once the picture of his genius and of his heart. Yet, perhaps, the perversion of so fine an intellect ought in charity to be referred rather to the gloom arising from a sickly constitution of mind and body, than to a heart thoroughly depraved."

I am happy to hear such good accounts of your young grandson's — I really trembled for him at one time, but am glad to find that he is now gaining ground. I am, my dear friend, yours affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXLII.

TO MISS C. M. FANSHAWE, CAVENDISH SQUARE, LONDON.

Edinburgh, 24th March, 1814.

My dear Madam,

I am certainly very disinterested in being so long silent, since I thus deprive myself of those answers to my letters which are to me a source of so much pleasure.

You were fortunate to be in London at the very crisis of so much public exultation. I think it must have been delightful to see such multitudes sharing in one grateful and generous feeling at the same moment; if it be not, indeed, romantic to impute all this joy to sympathy with liberated Germany, and gratitude for the blessings returning to the Continent in general. I envy you, too, Mrs. Siddons's readings:

I think so very few read well, and fine poetry, well read, is so delightful, and the more so as the delight is increased by being shared, that one may well be charmed with an entertainment of so rare occurrence. . . . . .

I must answer your question about Circe's herd—as you most happily style them—who graze on the island of Loch-Lomond. They are not brought there either by violence or any legal mandate; but it occasionally happens, that if a man's wife or daughter becomes addicted to this degrading habit he tells her that if she does not retire for a time to this Isle of Reformation she will be expelled from his family, exposed to the world, &c. She chooses this as the least of two evils; and her friends give out that the air of Devonshire had become necessary to her constitution. She is supposed to be in England; and the good peasants with whom she lodges in the enchanted, or rather enchanting isle, do not know or inquire who she is; and as said island is kept sacred from the approach of strangers, no detection is likely, unless the fair penitents recognise each other. There they dwell—"the world forgetting, by the world forgot," and it is said that they really do sometimes reform.

I think I told you how much better Mary was: I have now the pleasure to inform you that she is quite well, really enjoying better health than she has done for years. But I have at present another cause for anxiety. My dear Anne, who was so long in England, came down to me last spring in high health, and happy as it was her nature to be; for I never

knew any human being who, without great animal spirits had so much constitutional happiness: the perpetual sunshine of the spotless mind was hers pre-eminently. Within these few weeks she took cold—a sort of influenza: her physician thinks there is no alarming symptom, but I feel a fluttering at my heart from the recollection of past sorrows. But of this I shall say no more; it is perhaps the mere exaggeration of fear and fondness, and I will hope for the best. Anne is a creature sure to be loved where she is known: and who can know her as I do?

From all this family history you will be glad to be relieved by a little gossip of another nature. Know, then, that Mr. Jeffrey has married Miss Wilkes, a young lady from America. About two years and a half since I received a note from him, apologizing for a short invitation, and entreating that I would come next day to dine with some American friends. I had been much obliged to him for similar compliances, so set out readily and met these strangers. One was a dark, gloomy-looking man, another his wife, the plainest, worst-dressed woman I had seen, and the third was a gay, fashionable-looking girl of seventeen. These were, M. Simond*, a Frenchman, who left Lyons during the revolutionary horrors, and went to America where he married Miss Wilkes niece to the patriot; Mrs. Simond his wife, and Miss Wilkes niece to that wife. Simond, though very unlike a Frenchman, being

* Author of "A Tour in Great Britain," "Travels in Switzerland," and other works.

reserved, fastidious, and philosophic in the highest sense of the phrase, is a man of talent, great refinement, and agreeable conversation when he does converse. His wife is a person that, after the unfavourable impression of her unpromising exterior was got over, I liked exceedingly,—most candid, most disinterested, most benevolent,—with a cultivated mind, plain manners, and continual good humour. How it came to pass I know not, but so it was, that she lived much with the noted Mrs. Montagu, and all her opinions were formed in that school. The party besides consisted only of Mr. Henry Mackenzie (the Lounger), his daughter, Miss Elizabeth Hamilton, and myself; and we all did wonderfully well. These strangers remained for some time in Edinburgh, making excursions round it: I often met them, and they came to my little parties several times. I am told Mr. Jeffrey had not then leisure to fall in love with the fair American; but when he went up to London some time afterwards, that impression was made which resulted in his late voyage to America, and in the gallant achievement of carrying off his bride from a hostile shore.

I shall not lengthen this letter by saying anything of the present aspect of public affairs: I dread nothing but a premature peace, which, like all other premature things, does not last long. I want a peace like the pyramids of Egypt, quite solid, on a broad basis, and calculated to last for ever: I would not care though there were room left in it for one sarcophagus of a nameless king, to complete the resem-

blance. Will you offer my kind remembrances to your sisters; I am, dear Madam, your faithful and obliged humble servant,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXLIII.

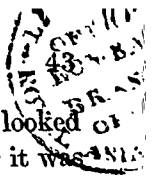
TO MR. JOHN HENNING, ARTIST, LONDON.

Edinburgh, 24th April, 1814.

My dear Henning,

The last sermon which the good Bishop Porteus preached was to his own family, in which I was then happily residing: the words he chose were, "Let not your hearts be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me." In that sacred charter of our salvation, where we are wont to look for comfort in our darkest hours, we find the voice of Infinite Goodness expressing these words of comfort, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee"—"Come to me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." I should not think myself entitled to point out these sources of consolation, with which you are so much more familiar, if I merely rested there. You and I are both very deep read in the book of sorrow, but in the Book of Life I conceive you to be by far the best scholar, and more fitted to teach me than to learn of me in spiritual things.

Your going to London was brought about in a manner so much out of the ordinary course of things, that you might well mark it out as obeying a call of



Providence. Very dark, indeed, matters looked on upon you at first; but then you are to consider it was the encumbrances you left in Scotland that occasioned much of the difficulties you have now to encounter. I know it is a heavy grief to you that you have not been able to repay my advances on your account. Shake off that encumbrance from your over-burdened mind, and consider the debt as cancelled, and believe that in acting thus I regard myself merely as an instrument in the hand of the Master whom you have ever faithfully served, to administer comfort to his afflicted worshipper.

I have something more than a presentiment that when I write to you next I shall be able to convey (not from myself) a sum for which no return will be expected, but such as your ingenuity will enable you to make from the productions of your art. I tell you this, that it may strengthen your dependence on Him who has already wrought wonderously in your behalf. Pray earnestly; pray that your faith fail not. Think of our good quaint translation of the Psalm so consolatory:—

> "Still trust in God, for him to praise
> Good cause I yet shall have:
> He of my countenance is the health,
> My God, that doth me save."

When you have so many just causes of vexation, what an undignified thing is it in you to make yourself miserable because you hear professional men, who are many of them ignorant coxcombs, talking in high terms of manners. Your manners are plain, independent, and manly,—and so they ought. Modest they

must be, of course, because you are naturally very modest, and but too keenly sensible of the disadvantages you labour under. Never take thought about what these fools say, whose manners are all surface and imitation. Your manners very properly indicate the tone of your mind: your own countrymen, of the very first order both for rank and genius, have been very well pleased with them. Those men, whose fame resounds through Europe, and who are the boast of the island that produced them, have been pleased with the character of genuine feeling, probity, and simplicity, with which your mind has stamped your manners. Preserve them unspoiled, and take my word for it, that in the long run, the voice of the judicious few sways that of the vulgar-minded many, who dwell on exterior minutiæ merely because they can see no farther. My good friend, you are too sensitive, and allow the changed looks of fine ladies and gentlemen who are slaves to the world, to affect you too much: it is the very nature of the life these people lead to make them selfish and inconstant. We have not had the trial of prosperity, and are strangers to its effects: we hear and, I am glad to think, see much of the virtues of the poor; but believe me who have seen much, that the virtues of the rich, when steady and consistent, deserve more praise. In the college of adversity, where you and I have been so long studying, the lessons are sound, long, and frequent; but in the college of the prosperous, they are short and slight, with long vacations. Though abundance should not corrupt them, they are apt insensibly to corrupt each

other, and cannot be sufficiently admired when they carry the full cup steadily.

It is time for me now to conclude my sermon, which I shall do by congratulating you, as well as the world at large, on the sunshine that has burst forth on the afflicted and, I trust, humbled nations; of this general prosperity, fear not that you will miss the little share that satisfies your moderate desires.

My daughter Anne has not been well, was very much reduced indeed, but is, I trust, recovering. These, however, are not afflictions that spring out of the dust: they are sanctified by the Hand that inflicts them. Adieu, dear Henning; your unwearied friend will never be discouraged by adverse circumstances; be true to yourself for many sakes, as well as that of

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXLIV.

TO MRS. D. H. RUCKER, BOOTLE, NEAR LIVERPOOL.

Edinburgh, 29th May, 1814.

My dear Madam,

After begging you to tell Mary that I was much pleased with her letter, I shall go on to say how glad we all are to hear of the successful progress of your tour, and of your kindly recollection of Edinburgh, which, after breathing bitter easterly sighs and shedding cold dark tears for your departure, has now assumed a new aspect, being all dressed in glowing summer smiles, and fanned with gentle western gales. . . . . .

A few days ago the Duchess of Roxburghe had a daughter, who lived only an hour. I am told the Duke is inconsolable. I went to-day with Miss Dunbar to see Raeburn's and Thomson's pictures. Thomson was very busy, I will not set you to guess about what, for I know you will not succeed. It was in drawing a picture of this bird of beauty, that so soon escaped from the cage of mortality, and opened its eyes merely to close them again: it seems it was an uncommonly fine infant. The Duke led the painter into the room to see the child, and was at first so overcome that he could not speak. People laugh, but I do not: I am really very sorry for the parents, and think their retaining some image of an immortal being which they may hope to meet in heaven, no way ridiculous when that being has been to them the subject of such tender solicitude. Very polished society becomes always, to a certain degree, selfish and heartless. I can never encourage making even an uncouth display of the affections a subject for ridicule. We most resemble our Maker when we love even as we are beloved, that is, when we love on, though sensible of weakness and no high desert in the object of our affection. We may reserve our admiration for high excellence, but innocence, and good intentions and feelings suffice for affection; we are the better for loving, whatever we love: if it meets our expectations, we are the happier; if it disappoints them, we are the wiser.

On Thursday, Lady Williamson begged me to matronize her daughters to the General Assembly, which I did. There was the finest possible debate, and

the greatest possible crowd: seats were taken by nine in the morning. The question of pluralities at large was debated, and to my great delight negatived: no clergyman, for the future, is to hold any office incompatible with his parochial duties.

We have received a letter from my son in India, who is delighted with his new appointment in the Commissariat, and says he is astonished at the size of Surat, and the number of inhabitants which it contains. With affectionate love to Mr. Rucker from all his friends here, I am, dear madam, your attached friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXLV.

TO MRS. HOOK, CONDUIT STREET, LONDON.

Edinburgh, 3d July, 1814.

My dear Friend,

Two days since I received your welcome letter, and would have answered it immediately on reading it, while the first impression was warm on my heart, had I not feared giving you pain by mentioning Anne's precarious state, and the miserable anxiety I felt in consequence of protracted suspense. I have now, however, the great comfort of being able to tell you that she appears to be gaining strength, which was all she wanted. I have been in such a dreaming state of existence for some weeks, that I really do not

recollect when I wrote, or what I said to you; I shall risk repetition, therefore, by giving you a sketch of what has so long agitated and distressed us all.

* * * * * *

I believe that part of my last letter was taken up with slight and hasty strictures on Madame de Stael's character and writings. I am glad that she has left England: prudery apart, I never relished the worship paid to a Minerva so much more than equivocal in conduct. Far am I from wishing to limit that mercy which keeps the gates of accepted penitence open to those who have erred most deeply: yet such is my impression of the rectitude, deep feeling, and honourable shame that belongs originally to the female character, and revives with renewed force when fallen woman endeavours to regain the height from which vice has precipitated her:—so perfectly do I comprehend what such a person must feel, from one or two instances which have come within my own observation, that I have no faith in a triumphant Magdalene sitting on the tripod of inspiration to deliver oracles to her admirers, or mounting the throne of literary eminence to dictate to her implicit worshippers. A real female penitent aspires to no such distinctions: humility is the first fruit of real penitence; and that penitence which has to expunge a public scandal given to the world, aggravated by volumes of the most pernicious sophistry, would plunge into the depths of retirement if it produced the necessary effects of deep and sincere remorse. The habits of that vice which is fed and supported by gratified

vanity are very obstinate, yet not indelible. It is not mere rhapsody to say,

> "Let Heaven seize it, all at once 'tis fir'd;
> Not touch'd, but wrapt, not waken'd, but inspir'd."

But what is Madame de Stael's religion when you examine it? That poetical German devotion that seeks theatrical effect and strong sensation; that wishes to forget immutable justice in divine beneficence; that seeks God more in his works than in his word, and worships more as imagination pictures him than as he has revealed himself:

> "As wise as Socrates, if such they were,
> As wise as Socrates might justly stand
> The definition of a modern fool."

The enthusiasm that she supposes essential to devotion is certainly more that of the imagination than of the heart. Yet I will allow that, even in this figurative and fanciful manner, the suffrage of a person so distinguished, in favour of religion, is desirable; we ought never to forget the declaration — "He that is not against us is with us." . . . . I certainly did not set out with the intention of wandering so far after Madame de Stael, but I certainly did grudge a little the homage paid her when in England, without at the same time detracting from the superiority of her talents and acquirements.

I did not know of Dr. Hook's advancement to the rank of Archdeacon till your letter conveyed the information to me. I think it augurs well, being not only in itself a highly respectable proof of his diocesan's esteem, but a long step towards a bishopric. I most sincerely and warmly congratulate him on a

promotion which adds, I should suppose, as much to his usefulness as to his consequence.

I hope you have read, or will read, Waverley. I am satisfied from internal evidence that Walter Scott, and no other, is the author of that true and chaste delineation of Scottish manners, such as they existed at the time he assigns for his drama. I am afraid, as you only saw fine and great people in Scotland, that much of this truth of painting will be lost on you. He is not, however, just to the Highlanders; and the specimens of Highland manners which he gives are not fair ones. He makes them on different occasions ready to assassinate, without their well knowing why, those who displease their chieftain. This is unfair and unjust. A Highlander, in old times, was much too ready to use his dirk in a quarrel, man to man, and held life much too cheap in skirmishes about cattle, &c.; but no people on earth had such a horror at assassination. Of taking the life of another without risking one's own, there is no example even in the sad history of the insurrection of Forty-five; and of murder they have such a horror, that they even scruple to use the term. But the consequences of a party brawl, where man is opposed to man, they do not account murder. . . . . .

I hope my next letter will speak of hope and happiness: little makes happiness to me, naturally of a buoyant spirit. My daughter Mary is at present with Mr. and Mrs. Rucker in England, and Isabella is attending my dear Anne, at Newbattle, in this neighbourhood: I have therefore no one of my own family at home except Moore, whose strong mind

and sound judgment have been much called forth by the late exigencies: she is in one particular like yourself—devoted beyond measure to those she loves, and little inclined to make any exertion to please others. My love to Dr. Hook: kiss Georgina for me, and teach her to love me a little, because I am, with much affection, yours always,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXLVI.

TO MRS. D. H. RUCKER, FELLFOOT, NEAR KENDAL, WESTMORELAND.

Edinburgh, 11th July, 1814.

My dear Madam,

I have perhaps been remiss in thus long delaying to relieve your anxiety about my dear Anne; but I was really so worn down with watching and anxiety about her that I had no heart or power to write till the end of last week. She is, within these few days, rather stronger, but has every day less or more of an access of fever; I trust she will rest this night, and recover the ground she seems to have lost.

When my first agony of anxiety was over, I began to read in early morning, or when I could, Miss Elizabeth Smith's Memoirs. You cannot think how they and she rose upon me: I had not half admired them before: there is such soundness and purity, such deep reflections and true conclusions, such liberal and exalted piety. Her perfect indifference

to applause and admiration distinguishes her from all other women. Never was highly-gifted being more free from vanity: she lived entirely to herself, and to her Maker and Redeemer: she never says an unkind thing of a fellow-mortal,—never murmurs at the dispensations of Providence, though, in regard to outward circumstances, her whole life was a warfare with calamity. She was not so ignorant of life or character as not to know that there was abundance of vice and folly in the world; but, knowing that she had no power to punish or reform, she did not sully the purity or disturb the serenity of her mind with narrow inspection into what was odious or contemptible, but rather exalted her powers and tranquillised her feelings by the contemplation of excellence wherever, even mingled with imperfection, it could be found. When her enjoyments were all her own, and every star that shone, and every flower that blew administered to her delights, as well as the richer sources of moral and intellectual excellence, who can regret that she administered to no one's vanity, idle curiosity or malignity, by frivolous or amusing discourse, such as makes people please for the moment, without laying any foundation for solid esteem or attachment? Her thoughts and actions "smell sweet, and blossom in the dust." To resemble her in what is most important, it is not necessary to emulate her attainments or to possess her abilities: we may all be as true, as pious, as charitable, and as indulgent to others,—as willing to occupy time properly, and as deeply impressed with a sense of God's goodness, even when it takes the form of severe chastisement.

Mary seems delighted more than ever with Mrs. Dixon and Fellfoot. I lament, as every one else does, over the divorce which is likely to take place between that region of sylvan beauty and her who was so fitted to adorn and enjoy it: I can only wish it may not be contaminated by an unworthy possessor. Adieu, dear madam: pray for the dear sufferer, who loves you more than ever you will be loved out of your own family. I am, very truly, your attached and obliged friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXLVII.

TO MRS. D. H. RUCKER, MELROSE HALL, PUTNEY.

Newbattle, near Edinburgh, 29th August, 1814.

Be comforted, my dear friends, — I speak to you and Mary*, — she is not dead but sleepeth, — she is most assuredly entered into that blessed rest for which her pure and humble soul was so well prepared. Do not mourn for one who was not like the children of this world, and whose faith was made perfect through suffering—long and bitter suffering. Of that I did not tell either of you when it would not avail; it would have made you most unhappy, and would not have saved her a single pang. My dear Mrs. Rucker, be

* This letter, referring to the death of the author's daughter, Anne, is addressed to Mrs. D. H. Rucker and to Mary Grant, then on a visit to Mr. and Mrs. Rucker, in England.

thankful that you were the object of such fond and faithful love, as few in this world have to give, to such a spotless mind and purified soul as this that has now soared to its proper sphere. At six o'clock yesterday evening, or a little after it, she fell sweetly asleep; and though wasted to a shadow — even that shadow looks in death serenely beautiful — her forehead and eyebrows are finer than anything I ever saw. What a heavenly treasure she has been to me! Whatever vexed or harassed me, I always found a balm from her lips and a cordial in her eyes to sooth and cheer me; her last words were a fervid expression of the unequalled affection she bore me. You well know that I saw this cloud impending last spring, and laboured to make up my mind to the deepest wound that could be inflicted on it: yet when it came nearer I could not endure to look at it, and fed myself with vain hopes. I thought—was taught, indeed, to think — that the fever had the power to restore her. Could I wish my delightful creature, ever so blessed in temper and in taste, to whom all nature opened sources of perpetual enjoyment, — could I wish such a creature to drag out the perturbed yet languid existence that has been her painful lot for nearly a year past? There was little hope, after this shock, for a renovation of her constitution; and He who made her all pure and lovely as she was, knew what was best for her, and after indulging her in more of innocent happiness than falls to the lot of most people in a long life, He has, through this fiery trial, brought her home safely to himself. — Good is the will of the Lord!

Could you but conceive the endeared tenderness that bound her and Isabella to each other, and sweetened the pangs of sickness to the one, and the toil of endless fatigue to the other. I never did see such a heroine of affection and humanity as Isabella. But now all her fortitude has forsaken her: all that she suffered for and with her sister seems only to have bound that dearest creature closer to her heart, which now bleeds at parting with her, like a wound incurable. Time and devotion will calm this agony.

Do not, my dear friends, mourn for the freed spirit that exults in its release from a painful prison. Thank God for me, that gave me a child whose presence was a blessing, and whose memory will hover round me like a vision of bliss, till, through the merits of my Saviour, I shall know as I am known. Could I forget her with a wish, I would not part with the dear image for this world's treasure: she indeed never gave her mother grief, but, when she died, — never intentionally offended, never hurt me with a cold look. My sun is fast declining; I have not many years to mourn. But why mourn for this blessed spirit; O do not mourn, my dear friends: consecrate her memory; think cheerfully, speak easily of her. Adieu, dear friends, adieu.

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXLVIII.

TO MISS C. M. FANSHAWE, SHABDEN, SURREY.

Dear Madam, Edinburgh, 8th October, 1814.

When I was favoured with your letter, it found me in a state of mind very adverse to correspondence. The creature who of all other human beings was most deservedly dearest to me, and whose heart was most entirely my own, was then languishing in a state that merely kept hope alive; but that hope so faint and so darkened by prevailing fear, that I think I look back on the summer months as one of the most painful periods of my agitated life. It would be vain to tell you how much I suffered in seeing her suffer whose life had been previously by far the happiest I had ever known. I saw, without a tear, this gentle spirit, without visible pain or struggle, dismissed from its earthly dwelling to share the blessings awarded to the pure in heart, and I then thought I should bear it better than I have done. I have struggled hard to support myself: I found it very difficult, which is the less excusable that her happiness is so certain, and that my own continuance here must be comparatively short.

It was on the 28th of August, about six in the evening, that I witnessed this pure spirit escape from its mortal prison. On the 2d of July I sustained the greatest loss I could possibly meet with out of my own family, in my amiable and beloved pupil, Miss Isabella Smythe.* Her's was the fellow-

* Daughter of the late —— Smythe, Esq., of Mount Henry, Queen's County, Ireland.

mind of dear Anne's, with the sole difference of Anne's manners being very frank, and her's reserved and shy: they loved each other very tenderly, and with immediate preference here. What do they now, if their meeting is permitted!

I must tell you of the conduct of Miss Smythe's relations. She left me nearly two years since, to reside with an excellent elder sister, for whom she had a just value; there was, however, much disparity of age and difference of views in some things. My Isabella Smythe, from the time her health began to give way, languished to return to our family, to every individual of which she was attached; and since her departure she constantly wrote, pouring out to me every thought of her innocent and pious mind. I however strongly discouraged her wish to return, knowing it would give pain to her sister and brothers that she should avow such a preference; I thought at last I had hurt her feelings by thus positively declining to receive her again. I had a letter from her brother lately, to say that among his sister's papers was found one in which she destined for me a bequest of a thousand pounds. She being under age, this deed was not legal: Mr. Smythe, however, confirmed the legacy, expressing the great satisfaction with which all the family acquiesced, in the strongest terms. Pray offer my best wishes to your sisters. I am, with much esteem and regard, &c.

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXLIX.

TO MRS. D. H. RUCKER, MELROSE HALL, PUTNEY.

Edinburgh, 3d November, 1814.

My dear Friend,

I received your last kind letter, which relieved much anxiety. The consequence—with many others equally painful—of my late affliction is a kind of tremor on my once elastic spirits, that makes me, like the rest of the wicked, "afraid where no fear is." Hope was once the governing principle of my feelings; but as the circle of hope contracts that of fear enlarges. This is wisely and well ordered. At best we love this world too well; and the ties loosening gradually, are a just preparative for the breaking of that final one that sets the imprisoned spirit free. Do not think, for all this, that you read the language of despondency; I am awake to various interests, and not, I hope, neglectful of various duties.

I do not go out, but I sometimes see one or two friends quietly in an evening; and was persuaded to spend three days last week with Mrs. Lewis Hay and her family, at Gilmerton House—an old picturesque residence,—where she has spent the summer in the most rational and pleasant retirement, only now and then visited by a few particular friends. You cannot imagine what good this did to me: Mrs. Hay's conversation has so much interest and intelligence, she is so affectionately loved by her family, who watch her looks and anticipate her wishes, and has communicated to them so much of her intelligence and ac-

complishments. It was really a cordial, from which I returned reluctantly to the petty bustle of a town residence, and to those traces of settled grief in Isabella's countenance, which make the recollection of its cause ever new and poignant.

* * * * * *

Have you seen Wordsworth's new poem, The Excursion? There is much beautiful writing in it, and much piety; but his piety has too much of what is called Pantheism or the worship of nature, in it. This is a kind of German piety too: they look in the sun, moon, and flowers, for what they should find in their Bible. The corruptions of the human heart, however, require a deeper and more radical cure than can be found in contemplating rocks and solitary glens: these remedies for the disorders of the heart must produce their chief effect on very sensitive or imaginative minds. Now that precious blood, which was shed for all that earnestly desire to share in the purchased redemption, is not withheld from many who have no rapture for scenic beauty, and can hear the music of the groves, and see the glories of a fine sunset behind the mountains, with perfect composure.

Mrs. Wilson and her daughters visited me lately. They are really a most pleasant kind-hearted family; Mrs. Wilson invited me to dine with Wordsworth and his wife, when they were here last autumn; but that, from a near and impending calamity, was out of my power. Wordsworth, they say, talks incessantly; his conversation has the perpetual flow of a stream,—monotonous in sound and endless in duration. I was quite surprised to hear this at first, imagining that,

meditating so much as he does among lakes and groves, he had almost forgot the sound of his own voice: but I fancy he is rather like the late Dr. Moore, who, I was told, was always speaking when he was not writing. These lake poets, having their attention entirely withdrawn from the world and what is passing in it, consider every thing that passes in their own minds of such paramount importance that it must all be communicated, and considered worthy of attention.

I am very much pleased to find that Mary suits you so well as a companion; her sound understanding, equal temper, and popular manners, have made her generally acceptable. Adieu, dear friend: believe me, with cordial affection, your attached,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CL.

TO MISS CATHERINE MARIA FANSHAWE, CAVENDISH SQUARE, LONDON.

Edinburgh, 13th December, 1814.

My first impulse, dear madam, on reading your last letter, was to answer it immediately: The impression of gratitude received from the genuine kindness and sympathy it so happily expresses has not been transient, though I did not immediately give way to that impulse. A mere answer of form would not have satisfied my feelings; and I really had not, at the time, spirits for writing a letter worth sending so far, or by any means adequate to those grateful feelings. . . . .

I proceed now to tell you, that though I hear some people impute Waverley to Boswell, the son of Johnson's biographer, who is unquestionably a man of genius, I still continue fixed in the opinion that it is Walter Scott's. I know his style of speaking, thinking, and observing so well, that were he himself to swear as hard as Lord Cochrane that he did not write it, I would not believe him. The Arch Critic* and I had a discussion on it when the book first came out; he perfectly agreed in opinion with me, going on surer ground if possible than internal evidence, though of that he felt the full weight. He says he knows every man in Scotland capable of producing a work demonstrative at once of learning and genius, and knows only one mind equal to this work, and his impress is on every page. Miss H., a friend of ours, dined on Friday at William Erskine's; he is the *fidus Achates* of Walter Scott: the poet and his mate were there, as also the laird of Staffa and other chiefs. In the evening there were two cantos of the unpublished Lord of the Isles read in the author's presence. Miss H. heard them praised and thought them worthy of the applause they received: she is a spectator in large companies, but a shrewd and intelligent observer, and carries much away,—not indeed of poetry. This is the bard's great work, national work I may say, for behold, is not the battle of Bannockburn, the Leipsic of Scotland, recorded therein? If his success equals my hopes, we shall crown him with thistles and add the rampant lion to his coat of armour.

* Mr. Jeffrey.

I am dazzled with the extract you give from your friend Mr. Sotheby, who has awaked the sleeping Muse of Tragedy. Joanna Baillie's are fine dramatic poems, but will not suit the stage: our critic was near sharing the fate of Orpheus for his censure of her in the Edinburgh Review; the ladies here were enraged beyond measure. It should have been more gently expressed, but was far from wrong. Your lines from "Ivan" are admirable: I am prepared to admire any work of genius that strips the profligate Russian Empresses of the plumes with which flattery has decorated them; I detest your great namesake, too, which I hope you will not take amiss. Pray tell me more of Mr. Sotheby's character and history.

I received a present two days since of Discipline, a new work by Mrs. Brunton, author of Self-Control. I now know and like her, but am not sure I shall like her book. . . . . .

You must not be troubled at the gentle and gradual decay of your venerated parent, who has so long been the subject for the exercise of your best virtues. You have retained him much longer than was likely, and as long as your attentions could render life tolerable; and it would be impious to wish him to outlive every purpose of life. This year has been to almost every one I know a period of mourning more than commonly fatal to human hopes and prospects: but the time is at hand when all prospects will be cleared, and all the parted friends re-united that deserve to be so.

I have left twenty things unsaid, but the virtue of my frank will evaporate if I do not directly close it:

franks have no to-morrow. I beg to retain a place in the good will of your sisters, and believe me, dear madam, yours, faithfully and gratefully,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLI.

TO MR. JOHN HENNING, ARTIST, LONDON.

Edinburgh, 20th December, 1814.

Dear Henning,

My time just now is so much engrossed that you must really bear with a short, and what you will perhaps think an angry letter. You know how many letters I have written, in the midst of my heart-rending anxiety, to sooth and comfort you: in return you tell me, not of real miseries, but of those that merely exist in your imagination. "O thou of little faith, wherefore dost thou doubt?" It was far beyond all likelihood, loaded as you were with debts and children, that you should get through your difficulties as you have done. Almost miracles have been wrought for you, and still you are, if possible, more querulous, more distrustful of Providence, more ready to indulge that nonsensical bugbear about people's disliking your manners. I tell you, incorrigible being that you are, that it is your manners, such as they are, that have brought you through thus far. Your naïveté, and not being like other people, created an interest in the breasts of the good and the worthy; as for others, I can assure you your manners

do not signify a single straw to them. It is merely by your merit as an artist that they will judge you; and if you had learned to dance at Paris, that would not mend you! I'll tell you what provokes me,—that by asking me to do this and the other thing to reimburse myself, you force me again to repeat what I wished to say very little about, that is, that I have laid out for you and your family upwards of fifty pounds. Now, once more, for the last time, I tell you to consider all this as a present, to which you are most heartily welcome. I also beg that you may consider that, if the Father of mercies did not deal favourably with you, a person like me, who has had a large and expensive family to support entirely by my own exertions, would not have been made the instrument of offering this aid. . . . . .

I have heard of your son's genius, and rejoice at it. Be very thankful that your children are preserved to you in health; and believe a quiet sufferer, that, while that is the case, you have not drank the dregs of the cup of sorrow. As for your religious opinions, they are a concern between yourself and the Author of your being, and will of themselves be quite enough for your management. Do not make yourself uneasy, when you have other causes of uneasiness, about other people's defects in piety: it is wiser and much better to look to the more favourable aspect of things; and if we do so, we shall soon be convinced that the Redeemer's name is at present better known and more glorified in all the kingdoms of the earth than it has been in any former period. I greatly respect the zeal and piety of those who are separatists

from our national Church on conscientious motives; I think they are in general more in earnest in their devotion, and make more a heart affair of it, than those who mingle with the stream of the world. But in this Christianity, which upon the whole I regard with reverence, I have always observed less or more of the mixture of a sour-leaven readiness to censure and be dissatisfied with the ways of others, and the mode in which the affairs of this world are managed. This is a proof of the corruption of our nature, and of the need we all have of rigid self-examination; for if not very watchful over ourselves, we shall lose on one side what we gain on the other; and, moreover, we shall lose that joy in believing, and that fruit of righteousness which is peace, that are the inheritance of a contented humility.

Now, dear Henning, I know you are so easily hurt, that this freedom in speaking of your distrust and feeble-mindedness will vex you: but it is better for you to be a little vexed than much deceived; and you have suffered so much and so long, that you deceive yourself, and imagine yourself overwhelmed when you have only such things to encounter as you have often been enabled to overcome. Believe me, however, that this, if you make the proper use of it, is the kindest letter I ever wrote to you; and that I always am your most sincere friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLII.

TO MRS. RUCKER, MELROSE HALL, PUTNEY.

Rosebank, near Roslin,
29th Dec. 1814.

Dear Madam I have totally discarded, and dear friend you shall henceforth be. Though you had not those strong claims both of merit and kindness which belong to you as far as regards myself, there is a strong and tender tie between us in the relation which we both hold to a creature of whose love to us, and of whose permanent felicity, we have no doubt. . . . . You wish to know how I am: I have been indisposed of late, but am much better; and of Moore's recovery you need not doubt, when I tell you that I write this at Rosebank, where I have been long urged to come, but could never think of moving till I saw her well. As for your friend Norman Macleod, he is indeed past hope, past help, past care; he is a creature one would wish to forget: I never saw good come of lads that wrote fine feminine billets, and knew much about things not worth knowing.

I congratulate you and myself on Henning's brightening prospects. I always firmly trusted that the God whom he serves, and who had granted him such talents, and visited his bleeding heart and sensitive mind with such severe trials, would not utterly forsake him. Had I not had this confidence it would neither have been wise nor just in me to make the exertions I have done; they might in some

degree have hurt me without essentially benefiting him. My reliance has been, however, amply justified. . . . . .

I think I must not pour out all my domestic intelligence at once, but reserve some for the next letter. Milton, speaking of the sociable Angel's communications, says, very familiarly, "No fear lest dinner cool." Now, though I am not a sociable angel, *I do* fear lest dinner cool, for I dread the dinner-bell every moment; and you know how ill very good people, whose only fault is want of punctuality, assort with very excellent people, whose only fault is that they have no charity for the want of it. Very odd that this last paragraph should have instantly brought to my fancy a vision of the dear H.'s at Melrose Hall. Be very kind to them, I beg of you; and let no prejudice prevent you from doing justice to the many virtues and endowments that counterbalance the habits I have alluded to. Highly-gifted persons have been sometimes, merely from a noble effort of self-control, and, what is more, self-discipline, regular and punctual; but, believe me, it costs a much greater effort to the children of fancy and feeling to live by the clock than for calmer and wiser, consequently happier people; they should be pitied for a fault which punishes itself by hourly remorse and daily suffering. We feed the birds that sing to us, though otherwise useless; and we should show some indulgence to those who have received the power of gratifying our most refined and innocent tastes, at the expense of that mental suffering which is the sad inheritance of souls too feelingly alive. I speak

not for myself, either in regard to genius or negligence; whatever powers I want, I do not want that of punctuality: I often wait for others, but am never waited for. Nor are the poignant sufferings of genius universal: you and I know two happy exceptions in Walter Scott and Mrs. D——, who are as cheerful and active as common mortals. But to return: had Dr. Johnson blessed your dwelling with his wisdom and virtue, and adorned your convivial board with his rare talents, would you have grudged him his lazy liberty, and not permitted him to swallow oceans of tea whenever he chose to stalk out of his den, because he had some of the faults adverted to?

Light reading was recommended to Moore during her recovery; and she has read a book which I strongly recommend to you, for your hours of relaxation: it is Mansfield Park, by the author of Pride and Prejudice. You will like it much, I am sure. We are here engaged with Archbishop Leighton's works lately reprinted with his life; you should add it to your library. Adieu, dear friend: remember me with love to Mr. Rucker and Mary, and believe me, truly yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLIII.

TO MRS. SMITH, OF JORDANHILL, GLASGOW.

Edinburgh, first day of the year 1815.

My dear Friend,

Affectionate and sincere wishes for the health and prosperity of yourself and all that belongs to you are the only gifts I can send you to mark the opening year; yet on these you will set the full value, knowing, as you do, that they come from a warm and grateful heart. For myself, I humbly hope and pray that the chastisements of the two last sorrowful years, when I might truly say, the iron entered into my soul," may produce a salutary effect in weaning me from this passing scene, and fixing my affections on higher objects. You, too, have had your bitter portion in the late years; but the manner in which you have both felt and borne it gives room to hope that its secret purpose is fulfilled, and that your future years may be blessed with continued peace and prosperity.

I have had, within the last five weeks, two letters from my son in India, the last, alas, covering a long affectionate one for his now happy sister Anne. Few, indeed, pass from time to eternity of whom I could so confidently say this.

I congratulate all — Mr. Smith particularly — on seeing the Temple of Janus shut up. This, I think, has not happened in our time before. The flame, when extinguished in one place, always continued to rage in another, but now, —

> " No war, or battle's sound,
> Is heard the world around:
> The idle spear and shield are high up hung,
> The trumpet speaks not to the armed throng;
> And kings sit still with aweful eye,
> As if they surely knew their sovran Lord was by."

All my concern is for the good of Jonathan's poor soul, which, I fear, will be puffed up beyond measure by seeing us go halting off the field, at the end of the warfare, and the gallant Wellingtonians retiring before a Yankee mob of militia. We were perhaps on such a pinnacle that a little humiliation may do us good: but how Jonathan, with all his native pride, will bear these blushing honours, is hard to say.

You had a narrow escape from a student's visit, which is generally a very tiresome thing. My son was thinking of passing the Christmas holidays with you, but he was prevented by a less attractive engagement. I sincerely congratulate you on the arrival of the young lady whose presence will so amply compensate for the gentleman's absence: my best wishes attend her parents. I am, as always, your affectionate and unaltered friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLIV.

TO MISS GRANT, MELROSE HALL, PUTNEY.

Edinburgh, 22d February, 1815.

My dear Mary*,

I have just read your letter, and with every allowance for human frailty, sisterly affection, and the sinking effect of many sorrows, I must affectionately reprove you for indulging under any circumstances the feeling, or expressing the language of despair. Had we been reduced, by the death of your dear brother, to extreme poverty, and deprived of the daily society of a beloved relative, as has been the case with many other more deserving persons, we would not be entitled to speak of "the extinction of every hope;" because, even then, the gates of a blessed immortality would have been still more visibly open to us for our transient, though severe sufferings. But here we had no right to rest any hopes on him so early taken from us, but those of knowing at a distance that he loved and remembered us. I never meant that we should subsist upon the price of blood, as I think all do who live at ease on what prolongs the exile of their relatives in that fatal Indian climate. We have the same worldly views of subsisting by our own exertions as we had before; and our views of futurity, if we improve and patiently submit to the Divine will, are improved by this severity from that fatherly hand which chastens in love. You

* The author had lately received intelligence of the death of her son, Lieut. D. J. Grant, at Surat, in India, on 14th August, 1814.

know my reliance on Bishop Taylor, who asserts, from close observation of God's providence and deep study of his word, that where the vial of wrath is poured out in this world, without any visible cause why the punished should be distinguished by superior inflictions, there is reason to hope that a treasure of divine mercy may be reserved in the next. This is a rich source of comfort. Then, what may not this dispensation have prevented! Riches are a great snare; and he who once sets his mind on making money is apt to forget the just uses of wealth. Great prospects of worldly advantage were opened to the beloved object of our sorrow; but it is impossible to know whether he, or we, should have borne this well: if otherwise, we are best thus.

It is the language of humility and submission, not that of rash despair, that we ought to speak. Much, much remains that we may still be deprived of: you have relatives to lose, whose value would be trebled in your estimation were you deprived of them; you have my firmness of mind and exertion to lose, which has hitherto been almost miraculously preserved to me, for your general good; and you have the means of subsistence to lose, which fruitless and sinful excess of sorrow may deprive you of. Do not think me harsh: the excuse you will all make to yourselves for a sinful indulgence of sorrow is that we have suffered so very much. The very contrary inference should be drawn by a chastened and well-regulated mind. Why did we suffer so much? God has no ill-will towards his creatures, — no delight in giving them pain. If He has so often broken, with a strong hand,

those ties that bound us to the world, should we not, by this time, be loosed from it, and prepared for all that the vicissitudes of life can bring to those whom sorrow should have sanctified? We are permitted to weep, but we must not lie down in the dust and forsake each other, but rather consider ourselves as a remnant of a once large and promising family left to soothe and support each other, and do honour, by our patience and submission, to the religion we profess. Comfort, comfort me, my child! and may the God of consolation visit you with light and many blessings. All here are rather mending, and support is given to your affectionate mother,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLV.

TO MRS. HOOK, CONDUIT STREET, LONDON.

My very dear Friend, Edinburgh, 12th March, 1815.

Excepting the cloud of disgrace dwelling on a beloved memory, which I consider as the most dreadful of evils, my late misfortune has wanted no aggravation. For months, for more than a year, letters that truly spoke the flowing heart had poured in from my son in India by every ship,—all the yearnings of family affection seeming only increased by time and distance; all the heart-sickness which this love of those left behind could produce,—all the prospects of success, growing reputation, powerful

and deeply interested friends; and, to me of all other things the most grievous, a constant complaint of not hearing from me, though I had repeatedly written with assurances of undiminished affection. All this retrospection I have to endure, and, wonderful to tell, have been enabled to endure it with a firmness, upon the whole, that surprises myself; though at times strong pangs of recollection, aided by fancy too active and memory too faithful, put me for a while upon the rack, from which I gladly escape by trying for an interest in every ordinary thing, but more successfully in any limited exertion for the good of others.

I think the unrestrained violence of my first emotions was of service, both in giving a vent to feelings too powerful for suppression, and by alarming me for the fate of those beings so utterly overpowered, who depend so much on my exertions. It is for them I mourn. The path that leads, I trust, to peace is not long before me; it is daily shortening, and, I hope, brightening. I did love the world much too well,—not for the pleasures it afforded, but for the objects of hope and affection which it contained whose pleasures and whose pride were mine. Ought I to complain that the ties which held me to earth are now become attractions to draw my thoughts and hopes heavenward? I look with trembling expectation for that effect to take place in my mind, but cannot as yet say that I feel it: the seed sowed in tears does not as yet give the promise of a joyful harvest; but I may, I trust, be enabled hereafter to say, "My soul waiteth for thy salvation, O Lord." I did not think I should have

said so much on this wounding subject. I felt as if I had seen dear Anne soaring out of my sight, arrayed in robes of light and immortality; I could look back on her unspotted life with a sensation at times like delight: I knew that, even in this world, few were ever so happy. But *here* I am so ignorant: darkness and distance hide the steps of his departure. The last impressions left are those of languishing affections and ungratified wishes. O for a vision of his last hours,—for some one that could tell me what he said. Yet with all the bright recollections left by the sanctity and sweetness of my own Anne, her departure left a languor on my spirits, that made me very unequal to exertion. This, I think, was produced by that wearing-out conflict betwixt hope and fear which preceded that much dreaded event. But when this thunderbolt fell on me, after the first shock I felt that nothing but a strong effort, with the divine aid, could enable me to sustain my arduous task in life after it; I therefore made a more strenuous exertion.

* * * * * *

Vanity, like a toad, can live and swell in the bottom of a dungeon; therefore I cannot precisely say whether it is vanity, or a wish to do justice to the attachment of my friends and the benevolence of the public, that induces me to tell you how great a sensation our loss has produced. I think there is scarcely an instance of a family so obscure exciting so much public sympathy and private sorrow,—for it is not really the ordinary lukewarm comforts that have been administered to me. Many tears have

fallen over my desolation, of such as are treasured up in sacred vials of remembrance. I know too well what you have suffered on my account to wish that these sluices of compassion should be opened again; and certainly meant this letter to show you how wonderfully I have been enabled to endure. I have, I fear, swerved from my purpose, and will not encounter the pain of reading it over, far less of writing again on a subject that I really shrink from. You shall have a letter from me, in a few days, on those ordinary topics in which I find it expedient to take refuge for my overwrought mind. It is not right to recur again, till time has thrown "a lighter shade on sorrow's urn," to this oppressive one. This wound is too deep to be exposed to eyes that can look on with indifference, and it is cruel to distress those who have felt too much already.

I only add what I must tell you, that Anne for a few days before her death, when waking confused from unquiet sleep, exclaimed three or four times, "Duncan is in Heaven!" Strange, this gave us no fear or alarm at the time; now it is balm to my sad recollections: he died about ten days before her. Accept poor Isabella's love, and believe me, with affection, your attached friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLVI.

TO MRS. GORMAN, BAGOT STREET, DUBLIN.*

Edinburgh, 24th April, 1815.

My dear Madam,

Do not let my involuntary silence persuade you that I am ungrateful for your kind Catherine's charming letter, which I read over and over again with admiration, — I might add affection; and it is not a little that could have excited any lively sentiments in my mind at the time I received it. There is a powerless apathy that always succeeds violent agitation with me, and seems like the sediment of subsiding emotion: this feebleness I should rather style it, has hung like a dead weight upon the powers of my mind, and really disqualified me for writing or active exertion. Poor Richardson (I mean the author of Clarissa) — his sorrows are long past, and, no doubt, are now succeeded by that peace which passeth understanding. I was reading to-day a letter of his in which, without any querulous repining, he mentions the quick succeeding dissolution of his earthly ties, — his much venerated father, his first wife, a very dear friend, two sons and six daughters, — eleven deaths of persons tenderly beloved, taking place in little more than two years! Do you know, I felt somehow as if

* Mrs. Gorman, to whom several Letters in the following series are addressed, was the daughter of the Rev. Thomas Bushe of Kilmurry in the county of Kilkenny, and sister to the late eloquent and accomplished Chief Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench in Ireland, the Right Hon. C. K. Bushe. She was married to the Rev. —— Gorman of Kilmore in the county of Meath.

I had a companion in affliction, and as if it were a kind of consolation to think that my own privations could not be a singular mark of the divine displeasure, when they were inflicted on a person of such worth and piety.

What has most interested me of late has been a visit from Campbell, the sweet Bard of Hope. You must know his enchanting Gertrude, his Exile of Erin, and other unequalled lyrics. I wish I could share with you the satisfaction I felt in seeing him cheerful, happy, and universally welcomed and caressed in his dear "Queen of the North," from which he had been so long banished by the necessity of seeking the bread that perisheth elsewhere. He is one who has suffered much from neither understanding the world nor being understood by it. He encountered every evil of poverty but that of being ashamed of his circumstances—in that respect he was nobly indifferent to opinion; and his good, gentle, patient little wife, was so frugal, so simple, and so sweet-tempered that she disarmed poverty of half its evils. This, I fear, was not the case with the Bard of Hope, whose morbid sensibility wars with the kind and generous part of his character, and who began the world under the influence of those violent discontented opinions that seem to accuse heaven of injustice, because the wealth of mind is not accompanied with those advantages which fat contented ignorance often attains, and very justly, because it patiently labours for them. Poor Burns had a great deal too much of this:—but I remember the Laird of Ellangowan, and

shall not indulge the long train of reflection thus suggested.

It is time that I should tell you that the Bard is now come to Scotland, after an absence of thirteen years, to receive a legacy left him by a grand-uncle. You cannot think how much every one is delighted: though you did not care for Campbell, it would charm you to see people rejoice so cordially in his acquisition. He has visited me several times, and is so amusing and so original; his admiration of other people's genius, too, is so generous. Scott, though of different opinions, he regards with fond and high admiration; so it seems does Lord Byron. Truly great men must have a congenial attraction for each other: the great English moralist is only an exception that confirms the rule. After being starved for thirty years, married to Tetty, and afflicted with perpetual ill-health, it is more wonderful that any benevolence remained, than that all suavity should have been dried up with Johnson. . . . . Should you be less interested in the hero of my tale than I am, you will at any rate be so much interested in me as to be glad that I have borrowed a gleam of cheerfulness from the Bard of Hope, and regard the reflection of it with more favour than any thing I could have said on a subject more foreign to my present feelings. My family are in pretty good health; I conclude at last by offering good wishes to yours, from your obliged and faithful servant,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLVII.

TO MISS C. M. FANSHAWE, SHABDEN, SURREY.

Edinburgh, 28th April, 1815.

My dear Madam,

You administer praise most judiciously, and exactly where it is not only soothing but salutary. The same expressed approbation which might inflate a mind at ease serves as a cordial to that which, seeing all things through a dark medium, feels shrunk in its own estimation. I do not affect to disclaim the character you honour me with, — of submission to the Divine will, and kind thoughts of my fellow-creatures. I am perfectly conscious that the worldly blessings withheld from me were such as my simple habits and limited desires could more easily have dispensed with than any others; I know, too, that those granted were those most essential to my happiness. Nor do I think that many in my precise situation would have been less benevolent than myself; I was placed in a country and in a state of life of all others most calculated to produce and cherish kind feelings. In the Highland district where I lived a very little kindness and charity went far; and there was no merit in being hospitable, because one should have been despised for being otherwise. When adversity came, it fell more lightly than it does on most people, in regard that it was not embittered by "hard unkindness' altered eye." The affectionate veneration with which all those to whom he was known regarded the father of my family, seemed to descend in tenderness and

sympathy on all that belonged to him. Thus surrounded by every thing that could nourish the best affections, that could expand and soften the heart, how different must my impressions of my fellow-mortals be from that left on the minds of those who have sought happiness where there were no materials to produce it, and lavished of their abundance upon the heartless and ungrateful. Every occurrence of my life, even the saddest, has had a tendency to light up my mind with the sunshine of benevolence, or soften my heart into tender gratitude. . . . . .

I have lately been reading over again the letters of Madame de Sevigné. If you want something to approve and to admire, look at this admirable woman, pure among the licentious without being soured by viewing their profligacy; artless, generous, and tender, though surrounded by heartless duplicity, pouring out the overflowing of the kindest heart on that cold, hard daughter of hers; pious without pretension, gay and social, yet secluding herself in the retirement of the country when justice and prudence required; and there, not afraid to meet her naked heart alone. Do tell me whether Madame delights you, and whether you are not much pleased with the witty ease of her son's letters, who, I think, though unqualified for the "smooth barbarity of courts," or the ruder licentiousness of camps, would have been a superior creature in any other scene and society.

Have you read Lord Byron's verses to the Hebrew Melodies? I find that people hold them cheap because they have not the terrible and sombre graces of his longer compositions. I am not sure that this short

and sad strain would suit or admit his wonted strength of expression; it is, however, the only poem of his lordship's that ever extracted a tear from me. For this I cannot well account. The incomparable sweetness and chastened tenderness of Medora won my whole heart, and I think her Corsair's grief, in gazing on her beautiful remains, exquisitely painted; and yet I did not weep. But the line in these melodies, "O where shall Israel lave her bleeding feet?" took me unawares, and forced open the floodgates of sympathy.

You wish to know what I think of the re-appearance of the Emperor of Elba:

> "I saw the wicked in great power,
> Spread like a green bay-tree;
> He pass'd, yea was not; sought he was,
> But found he could not be."

Perhaps you consider this only a quotation from our Presbyterian psalmody: I think it a prediction to be speedily fulfilled. . . . . Remember me in all kindness to your sisters. Tell Mrs. Frere's friend that we have pleasant neighbours this winter in the Grants of Rothiemurchus, who live almost next door. Mrs. Bowness is called by the present declining state of your father's health, to more than usual exertions; but these, in all probability, draw towards that close for which your minds must have been long prepared. Isabella is getting slowly round, but has better health, considering her deep affliction and general delicacy, than could well be expected.

Now I think I have told all that could interest you, and more; I shall judge by the slowness or speediness

of your answer whether you are or are not very tired. Had you been in London, I should not have been so liberal of my tediousness; but in the country one has leisure for such chronicles. I am, dear madam, with warm and sincere regard, your affectionate and faithful servant,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLVIII.

TO MRS. D. H. RUCKER, MELROSE HALL, PUTNEY.

Edinburgh, 1st May, 1815.

My dear Friend,

Do not be afraid to read my letter, as I should, in your place, were I to receive one that I thought would be filled with complaints from a heart rent by recent and deep calamity. I am so thoroughly sensible how great a share you have had in a distress beyond all human aid, and how cruel it would be to oppress you with those expressions of distress which would pain you without relieving me, that I resolve to check every wish of the kind, and write, if that be possible, as if I were not what I am. I am now going to endeavour to turn my thoughts into another channel, if possible, and to answer the letter I received from you before this terrible visitation*: I will do this for my own sake as well as for yours, as every letter I must needs answer costs me not a heartache only, but a severe headache: and I feel strongly the necessity of making, with the divine aid, a strong effort for those

* The recent death of her son in India.

who entirely depend upon me, and who have neither my fortitude nor physical powers of resistance. Enough and too much of myself.

Let me look at your last letter and answer it regularly. I am glad you approve so much of Mansfield Park, it being a great favourite with me, on account of its just delineation of manners and excellent moral, which is rather insinuated than obtruded throughout — the safest and best way, I think. So thought the author of those parables whose heart-affecting simplicity and force would, independent of their divine authority, enchain attention and enforce conviction to the unbiassed mind. I speak with reverence and fear. In all ages instruction has been conveyed through the channel of ingenious fiction; and all other nations allow us to be pre-eminent in the delineation of character,—for this good reason, among others, that we have among us more vigour of mind and variety of character than is to be found in other countries less free and less informed. . . . . You are perfectly right in your observation, that the general though gradual amendment of taste and morals is reflected in our novels. A bad novel is the worst of bad things, and the perusal of such the most melancholy waste of valuable time; but I think the writer of a good one confers a material benefit on society: such books, in spite of all that the austerest wisdom may hold out against them, will be read by all, and more particularly by those who do not and will not read books of solid instruction; and how difficult it is to instil a taste even for grave biography and natural history, no one that has not attempted the

forming of young minds can tell. The compassionate and indulgent model of all true excellence has said, for our instruction, "He that is not against us is with us." It is an allowable inference that instruction of the slightest kind, and conveyed in the least important vehicle, is not to be despised; though it would be a fatal error to rest in those petty morals.

I really do not, in my heart, approve of religious novels which mingle the deep, mysterious, and secret feelings of devotion with that detail of public diversions, and all the petty levities of life which must occupy much of these works. In the Countess and Gertrude, the introduction of religious subjects, so far as the author goes, is natural and consistent: not so our friend the authoress of Discipline; she is, I know, most sound and most sincere in her religious opinions, but a want of good taste occasionally found in her writings is glaring under this head. The Divine grace no doubt works miracles in softening the stony heart, and creating a new character in spite of inveterate habits: but no human hand is entitled to lift the veil that covers those secret dealings of the Holy Spirit with the human heart; and to paint them in fictitious narrative is really bold, if not presumptuous. I ought, however, to remark to you the merit of one portion of this work, of which I think I can judge better than you. The Highland part is admirable, though not well connected with the rest of the narrative.

Miss Glassell drank tea with Mrs. Morehead last night, and met there the Arch Critic and some of his fraternity, who, while applauding Guy Mannering to the skies, were amusing themselves with the opi-

nions of a young lady, who said, "It was a great pity that such a clever book was not more genteel!" It is very rare to find a Scotch cockney, especially in Edinburgh, but this lady's criticism certainly entitles her to that denomination.

Now, my dear madam, I have escaped from myself for an hour, and followed you diligently in the field of criticism and literary taste. I hope you will take this as a proof that I do not give myself up to the rack of embittered recollections. I will write you a more distinct and pleasant letter again, and shall, at more leisure, tell you how very much I feel obliged to you and Mr. Rucker for all your kindness to my daughter. I am, very truly, your warm and grateful friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLIX.

TO MRS. SMITH, OF JORDANHILL, GLASGOW.

Edinburgh, 18th May, 1815.

My dear Friend,

Here I am returned from Stirling, and by the help of my burning-glass faculty of reflecting and concentrating have in some measure enjoyed my journey through the enjoyment of others. I staid with the Miss Colquhouns, ever kind and ever dear to me. What a blessing they were when I went first, a weary wanderer, to reside at Stirling beside them! I paid no visits on this occasion; but Miss Glassell

and Moore paid them for me, and very much enjoyed their excursion, particularly the voyage in the steamboat, which is in itself pleasant, surrounded on all sides by objects of classic veneration.

You must not be rash in condemning Miss H.'s marriage. Captain G. seems a plain heavy man, but modest, and not in the least like an adventurer. No one more required a helm and a protector. She has abilities, fancy, kindness, truth, bright integrity, and —great absurdity,—from having had too much of her own way from childhood, and not having that perseverance without which ardour is mere wildfire. Ardour and perseverance united achieve and conquer every thing; but how seldom do they meet! Miss H. is constant in nothing but friendship and integrity; there she is true blue; but that is not enough for this world. Write to me soon: I need, very much need, all cordials. Hastily yet cordially, farewell, says yours affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLX.

TO MRS. HOOK, CONDUIT STREET, LONDON.

101. Princes Street, Edinburgh,
1st July, 1815.

My very dear Friend,

There are few things remaining to be encountered upon earth that would more distress me than to have that commerce of the mind and heart that has so long refreshed our spirits, and been hallowed by sad sympathies, interrupted. I know very well

that you cannot forget me; I know, too, that a wounding sense of what I have lost and suffered makes that remembrance you have so tenderly cherished painful to you, though not less dear. I know that if my trouble was such as you could relieve, you would spare no pains to do so; as it is, you sit still in silence, because you know not what to say. The number and depth of my sorrows have exhausted every topic of human consolation: those which are only to be found in searching the Scriptures at the foot of the cross, and in pouring out the afflicted spirit before Him who alone has wounded and alone can heal, are not yours to give. You are afraid to tell me of every-day occurrences, or ordinary thoughts and feelings, under this extreme pressure. Do not be afraid; I have ties that hold me to life, creatures that require the more support as their youth has been blasted by sorrows, which they have not my strength of mind and body to support. For their own sakes, being that they are truly amiable and deserving,—for the sake of the departed, to whom they were unspeakably dear, I feel it incumbent on me to support them with all the fortitude which has been given me to enable me to bear this weight of suffering. That I can do this after the first violence of grief has subsided, is what I must be thankful for; that amidst this outward composure I have many secret pangs to struggle with, is what must be endured quietly and concealed carefully. It is the condition of our nature, and is the tax I pay for having had the culture of these fair flowers entrusted to me, and for having been so long cheered by their early promise of

excellence, and blessed by their fond affection. Could I have wished that they should have lived to endure any thing like what has been my allotted portion! and had I much room to hope that they should not? Theirs was indeed "beauty for earth too rare, for use too dear." The fine frame of their minds, the delicacy and acuteness of their feelings, disqualified them for the intercourse of coarser minds, and the rough weather they might encounter if deprived of their only parent; they tasted of what was best in this life, and left behind the fragrance of an endeared memory. O, how many evils are there worse than death! Ask Lady R.'s mother if there are not. . . .

I thought to write to you a letter expressive of that patience with which I have been enabled to support my trials, but I have been carried from my purpose. I shall now merely say that I am removed to a very pleasant and convenient house in Princes Street, just opposite to the Castle. I look beyond it on green fields. I have a little plot of ground behind, and I have three floors, with three good rooms in each, over and above very neat attics; and below, a sunk story, with numberless conveniences. I would not speak so much of this house if I had not a hope of seeing you and the Archdeacon in it. I have leased my house in Heriot Row, which I like because it is my own and very pleasant, but it stands convicted of the want of room. We have got a new inmate to whom our house is to be a continued home, an interesting creature from her sweetness and intelligence, who hourly reminds us of dear Isabella Smythe, whom she seems to resemble in person

and mind. This same Miss E. is about seventeen, and is an orphan heiress of considerable fortune. We have another in circumstances somewhat resembling, but she has a mother, and is to remain only a year. Of Miss Hamilton and Miss Glassell, the heiress of Long-Niddry, who has been with us four years, you have heard already, I suppose; and thus you have a succinct history of all my household.

I do not in the least blame your silence. I perfectly understand that feeling which makes you defer till the spirit of communication becomes chilled: but do not protract a silence which, I know, disturbs your conscience. Do not think me become torpid: whatever you say about your family, your feelings, or any one thing that interests you, will still interest me, and I have more need than ever to have my thoughts led out of those paths to which they continually tend. Resume, then, your affectionate confidence; consider me as one resigned to the will of heaven, — deeply sensible of my privations, yet unwilling to cloud the enjoyment of those I love, by obtruding on them thoughts that ought to be kept betwixt me and heaven. If my own sweetest sources of enjoyment are, for the time, veiled from my sight and placed beyond my reach, shall I not partake the mild influence of a borrowed light, in sharing by reflection the enjoyments of my friends? Now, do write as you used to do; tell what you think, and open in my heart those sources of sympathetic love which long silence may be in danger of closing. Yours affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLXI.

TO MRS. BROWN, ST. VINCENT'S PLACE, GLASGOW.

Edinburgh, 15th July, 1815.

My dear Mrs. Brown,

If you knew how much my enfeebled mind leans on every adventitious prop since those that most supported me were taken away, you would now and then write, were it but to indicate that you have not forgotten in affliction and decline, her who was the object of affection and the source of amusement to you in her better days,—that sisterless friend, who was deeply sensible of such a want, and most industrious in supplying it, by drawing as close as possible those bonds of amity which filled the void in affections of no common warmth. You have nothing particular to say, and cannot suppose me, at present, much interested in trifles. Very true; but that is the very state of mind to which gentle impulses are necessary, to prevent absolute stagnation. I now set you a good example by telling you many things, that perhaps you know very well already, and taking it for granted that they will interest you because it is I that say them.

Here we are too full of the late great battle* with all its consequences—the gloom that, I trust, will sink into the grave with the mourners whom it overshades, and the glory which will remain, the blessing of the present and the wonder of succeeding generations.

* Waterloo.

The oddest thing that I have known for some time is John Wilson's* intended tour to the Highlands with his wife. This gentle and rather elegant Englishwoman is to walk with her mate, who carries her wardrobe and his own,

> "Through flood and through mire,
> Over bush, over briar;"

that is, through all the odd bye-paths in the central Highlands, where they propose to sleep in such cottages as English eyes never saw before. I shall be charmed to see them come back alive; and in the mean time it has cost me not a little pains to explain in my epistles to my less romantic friends in their track, that they are genuine gentlefolk in masquerade. How cruel any authority would be thought that should assign such penance to the wearers of purple and fine linen as these have volunteered.

I think, if you behave yourselves well and convince me that you still care for me, I shall take you in my way from Allanton, in the end of August. There I go all alone, to make out a visit, promised five years since to Sir Henry Steuart and his excellent lady. You will not wonder though I should have been for some days lately unusually depressed, since it is not long since I heard of dear Mrs. L.'s death, — the human being of all I personally knew that came nearest perfection, and who loved me with

* John Wilson, Esq., author of "The Isle of Palms," and other poems.

a sister's love. After this what can I add, but the assurance of my unabated affection to you and yours while I am

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLXII.

TO MRS. GORMAN, KILMORE, IRELAND.

Edinburgh, 16th July, 1815.

My dear Madam,

I think I must tell you of my removal, happily completed some weeks since, and my comfortable settlement in a very good, well finished, and now pretty well furnished house, in the west — which is the fashionable, and, what is much better, the quiet — end of Princes Street. This same street is more properly a row; a verdant little valley, once a small lake, separates it from the majestic pile of towers — for such at this distance they seem — that form the old town. Precisely opposite to my windows the ancient Castle of Edinburgh frowns on its rocky basis, separated only by a narrow chasm being the termination of the valley aforesaid. I have pleasant neighbours, people that I know and like, on each side of me; all my friends, indeed, are nearer me than in my former pleasant but more confined dwelling. Here, too, I have something that seems ambitious to be called a garden, and has really some petty pretensions, which appear, first in the shape of a fruitless cherry-tree, then of a hopeless stunted

plum-tree, and finally in tolerably decent jasmine, and some bushes that would fain bear roses but have neither bloomed nor blushed as yet. Yet the verdure in the middle is a comfort to habits so decidedly rural as mine. Indeed, from all my front windows the fields beyond the Castle look gay and green; and moreover I see the church in which Sir Harry Moncreiff preaches, and before it, the two quiet humble manses (for it is collegiate), shaded by trees that seem to speak of peace and safety. In short, much of what is soft or lively, antique or modern, animated or peaceful, is comprehended within the range of vision from every part of this dwelling.

I think I told you before of my inmates, who were some of them interesting creatures, and marked characters, quite out of the common way, though they had not claimed your attention as connected with me. Just when we came to our new abode in Prince's Street, we lost our sweet Miss S——, dear to us on all accounts, both for herself and for the worthies from whom she derives her good blood. She is gone in all her blossoming beauty, and with a mind whose still fairer blossoms are just expanding under what many thought propitious culture, to an aunt above eighty, who lives in great retirement in an old priory in the north.

You will think it a start from this subject, when I ask you if you read the Edinburgh Review; but this question points to a relative conclusion. You cannot more dislike the metaphysics and politics of this publication than I do: party brings together very heterogeneous matter, and there are papers in that

journal which nothing but the spirit of party would have made Jeffrey tolerate: the belles lettres are his peculiar province, and there indeed he is unequalled; and it is gratifying to observe the high tone of morality sustained through all these criticisms. Wherever the subject gives an opening to the display of his opinions, he speaks with contemptuous censure of all pretension and exhibition, — of all the tinsel that passes current in the world for happiness under the form of heartless fashionable intercourse, such as made up the brilliant society of France, once so much admired and emulated. Every thing that he writes on manners tends to exalt the reign of the domestic affections and quiet home-born felicities of life above all that dazzles and captivates the children of this world, distinctively so termed. I wish these precious little Essays were separated from the mass and bound up together.* Let me point out to you, in the first place, the criticism on the Memoirs of Marmontel, published a few years ago; then there is another on Madame de Deffand's Letters, and, lately, that on Baron Grimm's Epistles containing the quintessence of the witty and high-polished conversation of Paris, when the stars of the Encyclopædia were shining together in full radiance, and an epitome of those characters who furnished opinions to all those inhabitants of Europe who did not take the trouble to think for themselves. As for their opinions, they have all since ripened into action and spoken for themselves; but the manners which fall

* Mr. (now Lord) Jeffrey's Contributions to the Edinburgh Review were published separately in 1843.

within Jeffrey's province he has analysed very skilfully, and, weighed in his balance, they are indeed found wanting. What injustice my dull commentary does to his lively yet profound strictures!

Do you know that when I read Miss Edgeworth's last novel, Patronage, though I did not then know you, I took it into my head from what I had heard of your brother's* intelligence and amenity, that she had him in her eye when describing the Chief Justice. I am far from thinking Patronage equal to her other works. Novelties never displace my old favourites, and Ennui has long had the first place in my affections: it is indeed incomparable. Speaking of Miss Edgeworth, for whom, genius apart, I have a high respect, my friend Miss Fanshawe met her last year in London. She, who is a strict and highly-qualified judge of character, and thinks as highly as I do of her genius, was very much pleased indeed with Miss E.'s manners, which she describes as indicative of perfect modesty and sound good sense. She admired the equal civility with which she received all worthy persons introduced to her, as much as the calm steadiness with which she declined introductions to those who, by rank, wit, or assurance, forced their way into that society from which they ought to have been for ever excluded by their misconduct. You have another authoress, who, I think, did not formerly turn her talents to good account, but has lately surprised us with what we all consider a work of high merit: I speak of Lady Morgan's "O'Donnell,"

* Mr. Charles Kendal Bushe, then Solicitor-General, and afterwards Chief Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench in Ireland.

with which all here are delighted. Tell me what you think of her. I think the genius and valour of your country is likely to attain higher distinction than in any former period: you may well be proud of your countrymen and countrywomen. I must now close this long letter, and hope that you will soon write to, dear madam, your faithful and obliged

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLXIII.

TO MRS. FLETCHER, PARKHALL, STIRLINGSHIRE.

Edinburgh, 4th August, 1815.

Dear Madam,

I received your kind letter, to which the limited hour of a frank I got yesterday will oblige me to make a very short answer. I am exceedingly glad that you have it in your power by those cordial attentions which come from the heart, to repay some part of that immense debt which you owe to those excellent relations whom you have taught me to regard with affectionate veneration. . . . . .

I leave you to imagine the good it did me to think of Buonaparte in a British ship, basely flattering the people whom he so lately, in some of his insolent proclamations, styled "a despicable and perfidious nation." I admire the true calm dignity of keeping him floating in sight of that glorious country which was not to be profaned by his unhallowed footsteps. St. Helena is so like himself, so stony, so insulated,

so full of restlessness and discord; it is just a place made on purpose for him. If the pictures and statues which he carried to Paris were restored, and the army disbanded, I should be satisfied. The poor French King must be ruled by circumstances which he cannot overrule while he wears the crown of thorns appointed for him. It is impossible as yet to judge what may be the result of the evil ingredients still boiling over in that cauldron of all abominations — the French army: that devoted people will most assuredly punish each other for the endless miseries they have inflicted. You are shocked; but I have heard so much lately of their total abandonment of every principle by which society is held together, that I have lost hope of their settling till some signal infliction vindicates that justice which has slept so long and the rights of humanity so deeply violated. I know not how the public mind will endure the want of that fervour of excitement to which Buonaparte's prose and Lord Byron's poetry have accustomed it: — we shall never listen with patience to the lute after all these clarions and trumpets.

The place of all this violent excitement is, for the time, filled up here by a violent contest about seats in the theatre to see Miss O'Neil. People came flocking in from the country in numbers to behold this paragon. . . . . I feel a selfish reluctance to quit my pen, that for a little suspends the sense of recent pain; I am sorry, too, to quit you even in this letter, for I am indeed, with much more regard than I shall try to express, dear madam, yours affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLXIV.

TO MRS. HOOK, HERTINGFORDBURY, HERTFORD.

Edinburgh, 26th August, 1815.

My dear Friend,

Your apologies, or reasons rather, for not writing are quite sufficient; and as for the engrossing task you have taken in hand, I am no stranger to it; and well do I remember the weariness of spirits and tremour of nerves which were wont to succeed to a day devoted to giving lessons to my children, and continually broken in upon by the petty concerns of others, besides household cares. I have a great suspicion, too, that the Archdeacon, who in many admirable points of character resembles the late minister of Laggan, inherits a certain incurable reluctance, which said excellent person always evinced, to the drudgery or mechanical part of education. I know I am killing you by insinuating the possibility that there can be any latent defect lurking about the object of your idolatry: he, however, will not be the least angry, being well aware that he belongs to a race destined to imperfection while performing this short journey.

I look for Mary's return home to-morrow, and regret only less than herself her total inability to make out her proposed visit to you at Hertingfordbury. But the excursion to Devonshire, the visit of the Lady Boyles, and a hundred petty hinderances rendered it impossible. It is however possible, though not very probable, that I may see you again; not at Hertingfordbury, for before I pay my visit the Arch-

deacon must be dean at least: if bishop, remember I bespeak from him an invitation to his palace.

You would hear, and I hope with pleasure, of the marriage of your friend Lady Charlotte C.'s eldest daughter to Sir W. C., This Baronet is young, kind hearted, to my taste rather well looking, of the best disposition, and the best son and brother imaginable; domestic in his habits, has practical good sense, and is to me a most amusing person; though a passion he has for rattling in broad Scotch, and a sort of humour peculiar to himself which sets modes and forms at defiance, make people stare who do not know him, and actually make some of those good people who dwell in decencies for ever, imagine him something like a fool. But, in fact, he makes his folly a stalking horse, and under that presentment he doth shoot his wit: he is very clever, though in a peculiar way. A fine-looking person, who is sister to the Swiss lady that lives with Lady Charlotte, and lives herself with Lady Gray, visits me sometimes and tells me the young Lady C. is a charming, disinterested, natural creature; and you may believe I am glad to have this to report. . . . . Alas! for my frank, I shall lose it unless I send off my letter directly. I must therefore conclude with Isabella's love and mine, being ever tenderly, truly your (and very warmly Dr. Hook's) friend unalterable,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLXV.

TO MRS. D. H. RUCKER, MELROSE HALL, PUTNEY.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 30th August, 1815.

It is over this dreaded meeting with Mary which awaked so many painful remembrances; but as it was sudden the terrors of it evaporated in preparation: we thought so much of what we should feel on meeting that there was no new sensation to excite. Isabella is already beginning to revive in the society of her beloved sister, who is dearer to her than any thing earthly that now remains to her.

Poverty of expression is not usually my particular defect; but at present, being inwardly stimulated by my feelings, and outwardly urged by my daughter to say what I ought to you on the subject of obligation, I find that even here I am very poor. Instead, then, of telling what sentiments are produced by those obligations, I shall simply recapitulate them, and leave any one to judge what I ought to think and feel. . . . . .

I thought I had done with this inexhaustible subject; but there is the fruit. Thereby hangs a tale; for you must know that some of our friends shared it with me. The very night Mary arrived from England, the Smythes, brothers to our dear departed Isabella, came here on a visit to me. Mrs. M., who is in town for the education of her family, knew them and requested I would let her know when they came. We asked the Island Queen and her daughter, for the following evening, and John Wilson, (the Isle

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of Palms) to dinner, his wife and sister joining at tea, — for you must know the poet was at Oxford with Henry Smythe. Mary's fine modest American, who came down with her in the ship, joined at supper, and your fruit was so eaten, so praised, and so admired, that you would have really been pleased to see Melrose Hall make such a figure in Prince's Street. You never saw two people look so well after an excursion as the poet and his mate: they have walked several hundred miles in the Highlands, seen so much beauty, and felt so much courtesy, slept in the humblest cottages, always getting clean bed-clothes, and conned over Milton, their travelling companion, till they have almost got him by heart, and are become quite intimate with the affable Archangel.— Never did any thing turn out so well that was looked upon as so ridiculous in the outset; his wife is a fine creature, and has much taste and intelligence. Our Hibernians are very amiable, and add to the frankness of their country the elegance and modesty of gentle and cultivated minds. I am sorry they leave us so soon.

I must conclude, but will write soon again. I am, most affectionately, dear friend, with love to Mr. Rucker, yours ever truly,

ANNE GRANT.

Letter CLXVI.

TO MISS C. M. FANSHAWE, SHABDEN, SURREY.

Edinburgh, 30th August, 1815.

I thank you, dear madam, very particularly for your last letter. Sharp and sudden pangs return frequently with all the cruel freshness of a recent wound, but these are temporary though severe spasms, and I have more quiet intervals than I could have hoped. Yet the languor, the indifference about common things, the shrunk and withered appearance that all earthly objects have to the mind's eye, are more appalling to me in these dull calms than even the returns of bitter recollections. I think I am like the Germans now, whose tragic horrors are accounted for by their requiring from the dulness of their minds a stronger stimulus than other people. I have found no moderate or pleasing excitement so cordial to my mind as those received from your letters, and those of Mr. Morritt of Rokeby, the most delightful of my male correspondents.

To Captain Maitland's imperial guest I owe much, too, of a very different kind of obligation, for his tragic stimulus exciting horror and indignation in its highest degree, but not an atom of terror. I never once dreamed of fear; and was as well assured of the overthrow of Buonaparte as I am at this moment. You would think my heart, instead of being softened as it ought to be by affliction, was turned to stone, if you knew how merciless I am in my projects for

the punishment of those miscreants who have so long sheltered under the atrocity of their crimes, and taught little minds, like honest Fluellin, to consider big and great as synonymous, not being able to distinguish between the ferocious daring of abandoned desperation and the fearless fortitude of true magnanimity. It is not the rivers of blood shed to gratify pride and ambition, that I chiefly lament; — the cry of blood will be heard and regarded in the sanctuary of Infinite Power working the purposes of Infinite Goodness; nor yet the countless tears of the mourners thus made, — for the time is on the wing when the tears shall be wiped from all faces that look upwards for relief. These are not the worst evils that result from the monstrous profligacy that we have witnessed; it is the corruption of language, the loss of that moral sense by which the unbiassed though uncultured mind distinguishes between good and bad, — the fiery glare of false splendour investing deeds the most detestable, that has taught the ignorant to admire where they should abhor, and the learned and acute to serve the purposes of faction, by spinning metaphysical cobwebs to cover with their subtle drapery what would revolt plain common sense, if seen in all its deformity. You may think I cannot say all this without thinking of the sins of our northern Review. A friend of mine was much amused with my saying — not seriously you may believe — that Buonaparte was now in Agag's situation, and if we were now as literal and scriptural as the people in Cromwell's time, though the Prince

Regent might spare him, the Archbishop of Canterbury should hew him to pieces before the altar.

I ought to tell you, by-the-by, Mr. Jeffrey's opinion of your friend Miss Baillie's Tragedies. I have not for a long time seen the Arch-critic: Mrs. Jeffrey called some time since, but he very lately. He speaks more favourably of them than he is wont to do where his opinion is asked, but says they are chilled by a desire in the author to adhere too closely to the Greek models. It is wonderful how very few can draw or bend that bow of Ulysses. I do not know, except in Miss Baillie's case, that a female tragedy has ever succeeded; and hers are not suited for representation. Our critic is merciless to female genius, with the exception of Miss Edgeworth; and puts one always in mind of the lass Lear's fool tells of, who making a fire of live eels, when they lifted up their heads, always chopped them with a stick, and cried, "Down, wantons, down!" On thinking back on the fate of female genius and its short-lived fame, I really cannot recollect any whose tombs were long shaded with laurels of their own planting. The illiterate Laura, who could not read her lover's verses, has certainly outlived all the daughters of song. I hope Miss Baillie's thistle will flourish longer than those perishable wreaths which have hitherto bound the brows of female genius. Will you think me extremely national when I remark that, though the Scottish muse never wore the tragic stole until after the Union, no tragedy written since that period has kept possession of the stage but those of Caledonian origin,—Home's Douglas, Thomson's

Sigismunda, and Miss Baillie's Tragedies, which do not seem born to die.

I have been reading Scott's Picture of Paris, in which I am convinced there is tremendous truth. Whether the Allies act right or wrong, as far as regards their own conscience, they must be considered as ministers of Divine vengeance while pouring the vial of wrath on that thrice-guilty people. There are many of our citizens gone over to Paris just now, and many of our surgeons to see the varieties of wretchedness in the hospitals of Brussels. If I had not filled up my paper with matters of little interest, I could, from their information, such tales unfold. But I must now stop; and in the hope that you will soon gratify me with hearing from you, and with the offer of my best respects to your sisters, I remain, dear madam, yours faithfully,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLXVII.

TO MRS. FLETCHER, PARK HALL, STIRLINGSHIRE.

Jordanhill, near Glasgow,
7th October, 1815.

Dear Madam,

I direct this at random, being by no means certain whether it will find you at Park Hall. . . . . To begin the history of my late travels: I set out in consequence of a long promise, and a late arrangement, for Allanton about the middle of last month,

and stayed there a fortnight. Lady Steuart is a person for whom I feel the warmest esteem and the sincerest gratitude: my obligations to her were very great when she lived near me in Stirlingshire, and when I had just come from the bosom of an affectionate and attached though poor neighbourhood, to a place where I was considered as "a person of no mark or likelihood." When I exchanged those countenances that used to brighten at my approach for the cold scrutinising looks of wealthy pride or vulgar curiosity, the unwearied, considerate, I may well add respectful, kindness of a warm heart and a pure honourable mind like Lady Steuart's, was really like a fountain in the desert to my chilled affections, and made such an impression on my mind, that I am always glad to have an opportunity to say of her what neither her delicacy nor my own would permit me to say to her. Perhaps, in one sense, Sir Henry was as kind: he was as kind as his nature could afford, and she was no more. But what wide extremes of character does nature furnish! I thought my time well spent with this excellent woman, who patiently and quietly endures constant pain, and finds only at home any partial enjoyment. I do not think she will ever leave Allanton, — a persuasion which you may believe very much increased my regret in parting with her. After leaving Allanton, I paid a visit at Earnock near Hamilton, which perhaps you do not know to be the seat of Mr. Millar of Rosebank, who lately married one of the Miss Colquhouns of Luss. I have seldom seen a person who appears to me to have more excellent practical

common sense than the lady, with just as much intelligence and refinement as makes her very companionable and equal to appreciate the intellectual advantages of others, without making her too nice to be happy. *He* is like Ossian's maid of Selma — generous and mild, and in the strength of her character she will be self-supported.

I am here, though still with an aching heart and bitter recollections, much better than I could be any where else; so much so, that I think with pain of the necessity of returning to Edinburgh to act a part. I am ever, very much yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLXVIII.

TO MRS. RUCKER, AT K. GARDINER'S, ESQ., BRIGHTON.

My dear Friend, Glasgow, 8th November, 1815.

I am now paying a visit to my friend Mrs. Brown in Glasgow, and have waited for the sacramental week to join in that sacred office with her minister. He is the eloquent Mr. Chalmers*, who writes the incomparable article on the Evidences of Christianity in the Edinburgh Encyclopædia, and who for many years preached as too many preach, and employed his extraordinary abilities in displaying a lifeless form of religion, in which the great Atonement made for

* Now Dr. Chalmers. He was then minister of the Tron Church, Glasgow, and afterwards Professor of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh.

our sins was scarcely mentioned. A poet says of the soul,—

> "But let Heaven seize it, all at once 'tis fir'd,
> Not touch'd, but wrapt,—not waken'd, but inspir'd."

This appears to have been his case; and his life is now spent in a sedulous endeavour to compensate for his former waste of time and talents by preaching Christ only and Him crucified,—but with what power, with what energy, what artless and unstudied eloquence varying from the deepest pathos and the loftiest sublimity to the plain blunt language of sound strong reason, is not to be told. The effect already produced by this phenomenon is as wonderful as himself. But I must in another letter tell you more of him; I am incapable of doing justice either to his merits or singularities in this rapid sketch.

I congratulate you on having spent so much time with your admirable sister Mrs. Gardiner, whom I know better, I think, by Mary's description than any other person whom I have never seen. You would be told by many who should speak of this valuable relation, that it was very meritorious in you to leave all the luxury, beauty, and attendance with which you are surrounded at home, for a residence so quiet and private as I presume that to be, to which you have been attracted by your best affections. On the contrary I congratulate you on leaving for a time all those enjoyments which wealth can afford even to the worthless and tasteless, for pleasures that wealth would vainly attempt to purchase,—the pure pleasures of the heart, and the gratifications of the best regulated taste. To find a friend in a sister so able

to guide you by her example, and improve as well as delight you by her conversation, is a rarer and more precious treasure than most people in your condition of life attain.

I must now advert to your opinions of Southey, and his late singular work. In the first place, I agree with you that Southey speaks the language of Scripture without precisely doing so in a scriptural spirit. He began life deeply imbued with errors, religious and political, with wild unstable notions, yet with unblemished morals, pure intentions, and a conscience void of offence towards his fellow-creatures. His political and religious errors have been dropping away by degrees: and He, by whose command the light shines more and more unto the perfect day, may still further touch his heart and illuminate his understanding. I do not, in the mean time, very much approve of digging in the rich mine of scriptural eloquence merely for the purposes of embellishment. As to genius Southey always stood high with me, though I lamented the perversion of his fine faculties in the bad taste and unsafe opinions displayed in his earlier poems: he had also a pleonasm, an over-fulness, never leaving off when he was done. Yet, with all these faults, there are passages in his Thalaba that delight me. I know it to be wild and extravagant, and do not look for good sense or much of nature in the story; yet the rich imagination, the imagery, and the virtuous and tender feelings of the Destroyer and the Arabian Maid have a power over my mind which my judgment vainly calls in question.

I am preparing to leave Glasgow in two days, and

shall deliver all your remembrances in Edinburgh, where they will be fondly welcomed. I ought not to conclude this letter without acknowledging the increased kindness, were that possible, of my old and dear friends in this quarter, and the attention, no doubt increased by sympathy, from every one. I am, dear and attached friend, yours most affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLXIX.

TO MRS. SMITH, OF JORDANHILL, GLASGOW.

Edinburgh, 20th November, 1815.

My dear Friend,

If I wished to send classical sentences from this famed city I should tell you much of the Lethe that I drank and the Lotos that I eat at Jordanhill, but shall content myself with saying that my visit was in the last degree salutary and restorative. Whether entire change of scene and society produced their wonted effect, or whether something was not owing to confidence and attachment of forty years' duration; whether the cordiality of kindness always awake yet never officious, the seeing and sharing in that form of life where nothing is wanting and nothing superfluous,—of that calm happiness that comes not in transient flashes, but throws a clear and steady light over time well employed and minds well regulated; which of these ingredients, or whether all happily compounded produced that medicine of the mind which I found so

beneficial, I cannot say, but I must entreat you to convey my rich acknowledgments, warm from the heart, to those who assisted in administering it. To yourself I make none. You have been so long in the way of feeling for and with me, and know so perfectly well how I should feel for you and always have done, that the mere force of long habit, independent of virtuous sentiment or pious sympathy, would constrain you to do all you have done; you could not possibly help it. — So much for gratitude.

Instead of the much that could be said of all I found at home, I shall content myself with telling you that all are well, and looking well. You may think how grateful it was to my heart to see the light of life and hope once more rekindled on the countenance of my dear Isabella, always the first to suffer in every exertion of humanity or affection, and the last to complain. I really wish that this creature, so humble in self-opinion, yet so lofty in spirit, so little tinctured with the stain of earthly mixture, and yet so meekly labouring to work out her salvation in faith and humility, — I wish, I say, that she was some other person's daughter, that I might say of her what I think, without extravagance or partiality, — I mean without the imputation of either. It is lawful to say something for one who will never do justice to herself.

I attended church after coming home, but could not help making sinful, because derogating comparisons betwixt those I heard and the impressive power of the eloquence of Mr. Chalmers. This perhaps was an added proof that I had not derived the

benefit I ought from the doctrine he so happily illustrated.

Mary was agreeably entertained at Mr. Morehead's last night, hearing Mr. Jeffrey's illegible Journal read; I say illegible because his is a hand that only half a dozen people can read. The said Journal is the quintessence of acute observation, clearly and happily though very concisely expressed. Take a sample: "Cambray—noted for its cambric, its league and its Fénélon."

Give my love to Mr. Smith, and tell him I never dream of chess without thinking of him, and have found no antagonist as yet worthy of my powers. With a thousand good wishes from all here, I am, ever truly yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLXX.

TO MRS. GORMAN, KILMORE, IRELAND.

Edinburgh, 19th December, 1815.

My dear Madam,

I should have written to you sooner, but have been prevented by a variety of matters requiring immediate attention on my return home; and I had so many visiters that I was absolutely confused and worn out. Except to dear and intimate friends and people that had real business, my house had been shut up for nearly two years. I had begun this letter

before yours arrived, and most cordially thank you for the goodness you have shown in writing without standing on form with a worn-down veteran in affliction like me. I staid five weeks with the Jordanhill family; but in that there were included some other visits, besides occasionally dining with old friends in Glasgow. That family consists of Mr. Archibald Smith, who has made a fortune in business and has retired to enjoy and to employ it on an estate in the country, a fine place five miles below Glasgow. He is one of those people on whose countenance, sentiments, and manners the stamp of *gentleman* is visibly impressed;—such a taste for literature, such pleasant conversation, such an easy disengaged manner, that looks as if he were serenely happy himself, and wished, without saying so, that every one about him should be the same. His wife—my friend of forty years' standing—is a pure minded, meek, and amiable being, has an excellent and kind heart, an improved mind, and much delicacy of feeling; as a wife and mother she is unequalled, but as a friend and companion she is less perfect, because, from a certain diffidence of herself, she is too anxious, and always too much afraid of failing in some of her duties, to have that delightful tranquillity, that animated peace, that diffuses such a charm round her mate. Her sister Mrs. Brown is a widow, a faithful mourner, yet comforted by three excellent sons, who honour her with no common love and deference. Mrs. Brown cannot have more worth and truth, more heart, piety, and purity of mind than her sister; yet, though her lot in life has been circumscribed to a more confined range

of duty and society, hers is the stronger and more comprehensive mind. Her sister, too, would do as kind a thing if she saw the occasion, but Mrs. Brown would sooner discern where or how it might be done. Of this superiority Mrs. Smith is well aware, and admires her sister as much as she loves her; more could scarcely be. I think you will not be tired of seeing a little nearer people whom you have heard of long ago.

I accompanied my friends down to Roseneath, a beautiful seat which the Argyll family have upon the west coast, opposite to Greenock. There Mr. James Smith, my friend's eldest son, resides with his family in one of the oddest, oldest, most fantastic, and yet most pleasant and comfortable houses I ever was in. The Duke's family had an old castle here, which was a favourite residence, to which they made additions on every side. A few years since the castle took fire; the main tower was burnt down, but one of the wings remained, which is now the habitation of my friend. I cannot describe how pleasant and comfortable the well-furnished dwelling has been made: so pretty a library, so gay and airy a drawing-room, and such endless dormitories and closets I have not seen; besides a most baronial kitchen. There is also moored opposite to the window a little gem of a yacht that Mr. Smith has built for himself, which is an epitome of a comfortable house, with library, fire-place, and every possible convenience. This is a great source of amusement for himself and his guests: he not only encircles the

coast of Scotland, but goes sometimes to the North of Ireland in this floating tenement.

I have not seen Mrs. Siddons, nor have any of my own family; but all our friends have been constant in their attendance on this declining luminary, and declare that her setting brightness equals any thing they have seen formerly, and excels any thing they can ever imagine in a successor; there is no describing the sensation she has excited. The sweet spring of Miss O'Neill seemed not to attract more admiration than *her* rich and mellow autumn. Mrs. Siddons has been the wonder of her age; and one can only regret that excellence like hers should leave no trace behind, except in the memory of one perishing generation. This peculiar kind of merit is like Burns's Aurora Borealis,—

> "Across the lift they start and shift,
> Like fortune's favours lost and won,"

and in the same manner vanish without leaving a trace of all that surprised and delighted us. I am, dear madam, yours very truly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLXXI.

TO MRS. SMITH, OF JORDANHILL, GLASGOW.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, First day of the year 1816.

I cannot let this season—to me of sad retrospection—pass without as usual addressing you with my kindest wishes and warmest prayers for your happiness, and that of your family, as far as consists with the state of perpetual change and painful probation here allotted to us. I owe much to you all for those gleams of enjoyment which your friendship has shed on a deeply-clouded and much agitated life,—a life which to many would have been sad indeed. But He who proportions our strength to our sufferings, who knows what we can bear, and teaches us how to endure to the end, has fitted me for the appointed lot; the buoyant spirit, the awakened and excursive fancy which threw bright colours over the morning of life, have also had their use in occasionally breaking through the gloom in which my fairest hopes and prospects have been quenched for ever, as far as the concerns of this world are objects of hope. If I am not indeed (as I sometimes think myself) "blessed and chastised, a flagrant rebel still," I must benefit eventually by having so many of those ties broken which bound me to earth. Alas! if gentler means would have availed, I should

not have been thus violently called back from my worldly views and too fond affections.

I have said too much of myself. What shall I tell of new or interesting events here, where there is so little that interests myself? The thing that most interests and delights me will not, from your not knowing the parties concerned, have an equal power to gratify you; yet you must be pleased too. Have you heard me lament the leaning that the truly excellent family of the ——s had to those chilling Socinian doctrines that blot out the light that leads to heaven, and dethrone the Author and Finisher of our salvation? Their intimacy with people of high talents and certainly blameless lives, who profess these doctrines, had given this bias to their minds: but I had a strong presentiment that one who so earnestly wished to do and to be whatever was most conformable to the Divine will, would not be permitted to wander without a guide,—that a proper direction would be given to so much rectitude of intention and warm benevolence; and the event shows that my hope has not been unfounded. I have much comfort in telling you that Mrs. —— and her whole family have taken an entirely new view of this subject; that they go frequently to hear the most evangelical of our preachers, and seem deeply impressed with the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, which distinguish it from every other form of religion, and without which religion itself is but a form. This, to my feelings, is like the dawn of a little millennium. . . . . .

What shall I tell you of literary novelty from this scribbling city? The last subject of discussion is a poem newly published by Dr. Thomas Brown*, and called The Wanderer of Norway. You do not know Dr. Brown? Well then, he fills—worthily they say—the chair of the benevolent philosopher Dugald Stewart; he has great fertility of mind, and delightful variety of intelligence and playfulness in his conversation, which, in the long run, conquers the prejudice resulting from a manner so affected and so odd that there is no describing it. His lectures, I am told, are beautiful: he published poems long ago, but they were too metaphysical for common use or ordinary comprehensions. He is the very best of sons and brothers: this description is meant to introduce the first thing that meets your eye, in case you see the poem: it is a dedication to his mother. To be sure this is displaying filial virtue on a banner; yet, with all my dislike of ostentation, I must own that the broad display of domestic virtues, which modern poets will not allow to lie quietly with the household cat at the fire-side according to ancient usage, is, after all, better than being ashamed to have a mother or wife, like King Charles's wits of profligate memory. I should have told you that the Wanderer of Norway is founded on the hard-fated Mary Wolstencroft's beautiful letters from that country, to which her rich though gloomy imagination, her deep feelings, and the dark mist through which her bewildered mind seems wan-

* Then Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh.

dering, give a painful interest, not, I should think, to be heightened by poetry.

I am sorry I have not a better pen or warmer hands to convey my gratulations on this bright beginning year to all your inmates, including Father William and his sons. We are all yours most affectionately, as well as

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLXXII.

TO MISS ANNE DUNBAR, GARROWSTRIPE, NEAR NAIRN.

Edinburgh, 5th January, 1816.

My dear Bar,

I do not let a day elapse without answering your letter, to gratify my own feelings as well as to show you the misapprehension by which you are induced to think I could neglect you.

On Mary's return from England I did what I had long proposed—made a visit to my dear and valuable West-country friends, beginning at Allanton near the head of Clydesdale, now inherited by Sir Henry Steuart's family, and finishing with Jordanhill near Glasgow. In that calm abode of virtue, piety, intelligence and kindness, among my dearest, earliest and most attached friends, I felt more tranquillity than I ever expected to know again till the days of my probation are fulfilled. About the same time the Earl of Glasgow's family arrived at Hawkhead, their seat on the opposite side of the Clyde. You know how long Lady E. Boyle lived with us, and perhaps have heard how much she is attached to our family. Lady

Glasgow invited me to pass a week with them; but I was not sorry, though I love and respect that family, to be summoned back to Jordanhill the second day, in consequence of some English friends coming there to visit me on their return from a Highland tour. One is always more at home with those who have been accustomed in early life to think and live as we do ourselves. I am not in the least dazzled by rank, but am, on the other hand, totally free from the vulgar envy that tempts many to depreciate those above them, for no other reason but a stinging sense of inferiority in manners and sentiment, as well as station. I like people neither the worse nor the better for having a higher station than my own allotted to them by Providence: as they are made of precisely the same materials as those below them, I admire, without envy, the elegance of manners which in them makes virtue more attractive, because I think it likely that with their advantages I might have their attainments. When they make a culpable use of their advantages, I blame them, as I do my equals, without rancour, because I think it possible that surrounded with their temptations I might have been equally led astray. These are a kind of people that I should never seek nor avoid; but as I no more desire to be what they are than I should wish to be a lion or an eagle, I no more desire to be much with them than to ride on a tame lion or fly on an eagle's back.

You ask my opinion of Clan Albyn. Great beauties are mingled in it, I think, with great faults. The good feeling and delicacy that pervades the whole is its greatest charm; the next is the perfect

accuracy with which Highland feelings and manners are delineated. I think the author, whoever that may be, is young, pure minded, enthusiastic, and deeply read in poetry. By-the-by, nothing can be more poetical than the prose of this book, and nothing more prosaic than the poetry.—Guy Mannering is absolute perfection as a narrative: I never tire of reading it over, but cannot trust myself to talk of that charmer Dándie Dinmont, or I should never have done.

I think the life you now lead must needs, from the nature of your duties, be confined and solitary. But you will have a rich reward hereafter: and the consciousness of virtuous exertion, the certainty that what is performed from the best motives will be duly estimated by that eye to which all hearts lie open, and the strength that is given when any great exertion of mind is demanded, will support you. I will now urge you to write to me from a motive in which I consult your own advantage; it will vary your occupations, turn the current of weary thought, and cherish recollections that are good for the heart. But then you are not to think I have as much leisure for writing as you have. You must really conquer the jealous propensity to think you are overlooked; it is the vice of people in retirement, who having great leisure to think of themselves and their concerns, are not aware of the endless calls of the busy world upon attention, or of the manner in which successive sad events stun and incapacitate the mind. I am, dear Bar, ever yours most affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLXXIII.

TO MRS. RUCKER, MELROSE HALL, PUTNEY.

Edinburgh, 20th February, 1816.

My dear Friend,

I certainly very much approve, as far as I know, of the agricultural plan of life intended for your young friend. His success must depend much upon himself; and what will most insure it is his being of that tranquil, unambitious temper, which can be satisfied with a pursuit which does not lead to high distinction or profits, but insures competency. It moreover keeps the mind perpetually awake, presents something new to the senses and the thoughts for every passing day, and cherishes the seeds of virtue and piety, by the benign influence of the varying countenances impressed in all its changes, with the traces of Infinite Power working the will of Infinite Wisdom. I do not say that the gross unlettered mind of vulgar stupidity sees and feels all these sentiments, however obvious; as little do they affect the mere fox-hunter, who has no rural pleasures but what are connected with field-sports: but a young man of good feelings, well educated, is naturally led by the habits of rural life to these enjoyments. I cannot trust myself to say much on this subject: I am so partial to a country life in the quiet humble way that I have been accustomed to, that I could never think that any other bore the least comparison to it; and should imagine that those whose wealth sets them above attending to the minutest details of agriculture lose half the charm of that beneficial sentence

which ordains man to till the ground from whence he was taken.

Now I must tell you of Miss Helen Dunbar. Her last letter was very long and very gay, nothing could be more light-hearted: her description of her present self reminds me of what Pope, or Young rather, says of some literary lady: —

> "With legs tossed high on her sophie she sits,
> Vouchsafing audience to contending wits."

She says she finds living by herself at Forres quite pleasant. She often dines out and mingles with their parties; and there are three remarkably clever young men, who take in a miscellany called the Champion, and other periodicals and books, and come in evenings to her house to read them, — and in short keep a kind of court of criticism there, at which she describes herself as the presiding genius, and calls these young men her champions, I suppose in allusion to said miscellany. Her head seems entirely full of these youths and their talents: one is the doctor, the other I think a young preacher, and the third, though nature meant him for something very superior, condescends to teach a school.

I wished to ask you several questions, but every thing must be postponed to the desire of overtaking the post; for which reason I must bid you hastily, though most affectionately, farewell. I am, dear friend, yours,

ANNE GRANT.

Letter CLXXIV.

TO MRS. SMITH, OF JORDANHILL, GLASGOW.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 24th February, 1816.

I seem to write to you seldomest when I think of you oftenest. My constant seclusion for some weeks past, with a cold that refuses either to grow worse or better, gave me room to think; and when I do find that leisure I always think backwards. Among the ghosts of departed hours what hosts of sins and sorrows are mine to meet! I always meet you, however, in this sad company "with cordials in your eyes and hands;" and cannot look back on those years of calamity without a renewed sense of what comfort I have derived from your friendship.

Our new inmate, Miss ——, has arrived: she appears a gentle, timid creature, very willing to please, but deficient in that energy which makes acquisition of knowledge a delight. But she has for two years past lived with her aunt, whose declining health required much seclusion: little opening of mind could be looked for there. I suppose, had she been so inclined, she might complain like the lady in Tom Sheridan's novel, who said she passed a very dull evening among a set of grave people, that sat in a circle and talked all manner of *goodness* for three hours. I fancy this goodness in my young friend's circle might have a little alloy of gossip and genealogy; but, on the whole, it was neither youthful in its spirit, nor calculated for modern times. She is, however, very good tempered, her air and manner are not ungenteel, and she seems

to feel at ease, or rather happy, in her new abode. Miss G. does really great credit to the pains bestowed on her. She is a very fine creature; her faults are merely those of habit and a vigorous uncultured mind, — those in short, that belong to considerable strength of character, in which the process of refinement has scarcely begun. She has, however, a good temper, a good understanding, and that rare union of ardour and perseverance, before which difficulties vanish, and by which seeming impossibilities have been accomplished.

You have perhaps seen that wondrous effort of genius, the Siege of Corinth, which, beyond measure, dazzles and delights me, though I am quite prepared for its being much undervalued. I am greatly provoked at the apathy with which the heroism shown in defence of the cross against the Saracen infidels has been allowed to pass uncelebrated and unsung. Yet with what cold neglect has the memory of those worthies been forsaken. First, our Protestant zeal would not tolerate even what was most tolerable in the Catholic religion, — that zeal for the defence of the cross, for local sanctity, and for the outward splendour of devotion, of which so many fine specimens still remain; — we would not allow "the Beast" even the merit of pushing his horns in a right direction. Next came Voltaire eagerly grasping at any pretence to turn zeal for Christianity into ridicule; because it certainly was in the Crusades often a zeal without knowledge, and much evil must have mingled with good where so many ignorant and vicious people

thought to atone for their crimes by mingling in the ranks of those devoted bands. Then followed Gibbon at the head of the sceptical tribe, sneering at and treating with cold scorn all the feelings awakened by the scenes hallowed by sacred recollections. You will think me very prolix and attempting to be very learned; but then I want you to set a due value on Lord Byron's effort, "to snatch a portion of those acts from fate" whose former oblivion I so much regretted.

I think I told you we had Mrs. Green about a fortnight with us. She is one of those who take pleasure in speaking of your household, and more particularly of the Fast-day she spent with you, which she compares to a water-spring in a desert. I am, with love to Mr. Smith, ever very truly yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLXXV.

TO MISS ANNE DUNBAR, GARROWSTRIPE, NEAR NAIRN.

Edinburgh, 29th April, 1816.

My dearest Bar — for dear indeed you are and have been to me, and doubly so since I heard of your illness. I warmly reason with myself on all the innocence and merit of your past life, and the great duty you have been enabled to perform towards your parents, well assured that without that support from above which is only afforded to humble be-

lievers in a Redeemer, you could not have devoted yourself so entirely to such a self-denying duty. All this I muster up in my mind, yet all this is not enough to support it under the thoughts of your present sufferings. My object in now writing is to entreat you, if you are at all capable of undertaking the journey, to come to Edinburgh for medical advice. Dr. Gregory, the prince of physicians, will afford you all the aid that human art can give to human infirmity. Those on whose childhood you have looked with tender complacence will attend you with unwearied care; and you will find me all that ever I was to you in true kindness and sympathy, and more I cannot well be. Do not consider this proposal as a matter of form. Still as accumulated sorrows make the present scene fade before our eyes, we are led to look to the future and cherish the memory of the past,—of the friends whose society shed an innocent satisfaction over the hours that were passed among those we loved on earth, and hope to meet when this scene of vicissitude is exchanged for the dearly-purchased happiness which has been bought with the precious blood of a Redeemer.

My own dear Bar, let me beseech you to write immediately on receipt of this, to say how you are, and when we may hope to see you: I speak for the whole family. We are indeed all with true affection, yours faithfully,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLXXVI.

TO JOHN RICHARDSON, ESQ., OF PITFOUR, PERTH.

Ammondell, near Edinburgh,
21st May, 1816.

My dear Sir,

You will be surprised to receive a letter from me dated here, and I also flatter myself you are beginning to wonder at the length of my silence. This has been owing to various circumstances; for though I know that your thoughts and views, happily for yourself, live in a higher region, and that consequently you can only be much interested in the world you have in a great measure forsaken when an opportunity occurs of doing good to those still involved in its cares, this does not prevent my writing;—first, because I find a kind of ease in communicating my little matters to a friend so faithful; and next, because it is a comfort to me to be kept alive in your remembrance, by calling your thoughts back to me. I should feel forlorn without hearing now and then from you and Mr. Hatsell: I consider you both as highly-favoured mortals, having had your lot most happily cast, favoured with the power and will to do much good, and strength of resolution to avoid evil; and each, after a long life of useful exertion, retiring from the cares and business of this world, to prepare in easy tranquillity for a better.

I have been for some time promising a visit to my old friend the Honourable Mrs. Henry Erskine; and three days ago I came out here, where I have been

meeting the long-deferred smiles of spring in the most beautiful scenery, and in the most pleasant society. Of Henry Erskine's wit, abilities, and political disappointments you must have heard much.* His wife, once Miss Erskine Munro, was also distinguished for talents, and, what is better, honour, sincerity, and a warm and generous heart. Their congenial tastes, and very fond affection for each other, are, under all disappointments, a source of happiness to both: they live in profound retirement, solely occupied in adorning and improving this fine place, which is the more an object to them, as it adjoins to Lord Buchan's estate, on which there is no mansion-house, and which will eventually be their own. Mr. Erskine's imagination and inexhaustible spirits make him still a lively and pleasant companion; and she is to me what she ever was, though our paths in life have been so different.

It is high time that I should tell you how much I like your grandson†, whom I was really afraid to see from an apprehension that I should not like him so well as I wished; and I should be much mortified if your representative, and that of his worthy parents, had been deficient in any thing that is creditable or pleasing about a gentleman, or had the consequence and self-opinion of a young heir, bred to look forward to wealth as a substitute for that to which it ought to be subservient. My apprehensions soon subsided

* The late Hon. Henry Erskine, son of the Earl of Buchan: he was Dean of the Faculty of Advocates, and Lord Advocate of Scotland in 1806. Mrs. Erskine, who still survives, is the sister of the late Sir Thomas Munro, Bart., Governor of Madras.

† Now Sir John S. Richardson, of Pitfour, Bart.

into perfect complacency when I saw his modest address, and simple, though easy and well-bred manners; and, on conversing with him, I found his opinions so just, and his reverence for all that ought to be revered so well founded, that I am satisfied he does not hold his most essential principles with the slight grasp common among fashionable young men, but will preserve them as rules of action, and cherish them as treasures beyond what the world has to bestow. . . . . I am, dear sir, your sincere and grateful friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLXXVII.

TO MISS ——, NEW ENGLAND, AMERICA.

My dear Madam, Edinburgh, 25th May, 1816.

I am certainly very culpable in my own eyes for so long neglecting a letter that I received with gratitude, and read with admiration. It is time, too, to thank your mother, which I do with warm gratitude, for the sermon she has so kindly sent to me. I have formerly admired the eloquence of Mason, in its most affecting display on the death of General Hamilton; I have heard, too, of Mrs. Graham, to whose memory this sermon is consecrated, in which the character of the deceased is portrayed in those vivid colours which genius only can give to its pictures: it is also animated by a glow of fervent piety which must evi-

dently have been felt by the author. Yet, to my taste, there is rather a luxuriance in the language, a degree of ornament more suited to the French taste than to the chastened severity of ours, as far as regards the eloquence of the pulpit. For style, I consider your Buckminster's Sermons as models; nothing can be more classically pure, more adapted to the solemn importance of the topics discussed in his discourses;—there are no familiar, and hackneyed phrases on the one hand, and on the other no studied embellishment, no rhetorical flourishes; it has all the simple dignity and impressive force and clearness suitable to the importance and deep interest of the subjects of which he treats. . . . . I cannot quit the topic of American literature without expressing the pleasure I derived from reading poems by Miss Lydia Huntly, which I think you must have seen. So modest a poetess, whose pretensions are in every respect so humble, cannot be hurt by deserved praise; I therefore wish you could find some channel to transmit to her the very high approbation with which her poems have been perused by the very first judges in this critical city. She does not appear to me possessed of that powerful and commanding genius fitted to form a new creation of its own, and people it with aerial inhabitants that feel and excite every human passion; but, in her own province, she certainly excels, and in that in which we critics of the old world think our grandchildren of the new most deficient — good taste and elegant simplicity. You are shocked, perhaps, at this bold declaration; but I only tell you of the prevailing opinion, without asserting its justice. We

account for this by your too great intercourse with France, which has indeed had a fatal influence (France, I mean) over Europe in general for nearly two centuries past; less, perhaps, over our comparatively free and enlightened country, which always cherished a wholesome hostility to that land of gay seductions.

The small remains of my once large and promising family are at home, and well, for the present. My only son is apprenticed to a lawyer, — is diligent and steady, and shows in every respect the disposition to be wished for. Moore is on a visit at Jordanhill just now; she is a strong-minded creature, who loves not many, but loves much. Her affection for the family of our worthy friends in —— casts, in her eyes, a radiance over every object from the favoured land of their nativity. . . . . I must now close this letter, and redeem, if that be possible, my character for gratitude and friendship with you, by following it with another, to which I shall endeavour to give more interest by telling something of people and of books that you might like to hear of. I never ceased to think of you and your mother, and to think of you among those excellent of the earth on whom my remaining delight is placed; for, however deep the clouds that may envelope me, I am so made that, while life and reason remain, I shall feel pleasure in contemplating those characters on which I find the strongest traces of that image — "though sullied and dishonoured, still divine," — which the sacrifice of Infinite love shall yet restore to its original brightness. Farewell, dear Miss ——; and believe me with truth and sincerity, yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLXXVIII.

TO MRS. GORMAN, KILMORE, IRELAND.

Edinburgh, 28th May, 1816.

My dear Madam,

I received your letter with much pleasure, because it brought such good accounts of your mother and family.

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I have been almost heart-broken with reading Southey's Poetical Pilgrimage, because on the same day I had noticed in the papers the death of that son whom he describes as "his dear, his only, and his studious boy." The child was indeed a wonder for premature acquirements, and a temper the most amiable. There is a fatal delight which studious men indulge in seeing their children astonish the world as premature prodigies, which never fails to weaken the body, and, I think, very often eventually weakens the mind, by making it the mere depository for the thoughts of other people, without vigour or lively curiosity to explore new regions of intellect, or sagacity to act with decision in the common affairs of life. A man may grow learned in his study, and, by having his studies well directed, he may also grow virtuous there: but I would also have him useful and amiable, and I am not sure that he will be more so from being over-educated. I would have a king, for instance, neither a profound metaphysician nor very deeply skilled in belles lettres or the fine arts; I would have him relish, and in some degree patronise

them, but by no means contend for the prize of such distinction with those who have nothing better to do. This is a very disinterested decision for me who have high delight in every exercise of talent, — perhaps I should say, production of genius: but a mere man or woman of letters I should consider as too much detached from the common occupations and enjoyments of life, and in danger of undervaluing every thing and person unconnected with their own pursuits. I think it is to the credit of my own country that, except in colleges, there is scarcely such a thing in Scotland as a man making letters, or authorship I should say, his sole occupation. Almost every man who has by his works adorned or informed his country, has had some profession or employment to which part of his time was devoted. How few works of celebrity have issued from the bosom of those colleges, where so many truly learned men are supported for the purpose of being indulged with learned leisure! I should suppose that a luxury of leisure and literature would partake of the enfeebling qualities of every other kind of luxury.

I should have told you of the annual festival of intellect which we enjoy at the General Assembly of the Clergy, which meets here in the end of May. All matters of debate not settled in the lower church-courts are appealed to this assembly, in which men of talents, buried in country parishes, are glad of this opportunity to display their eloquence or wit, and the first advocates at the bar are also engaged by the contending parties. I am told that nothing can more resemble the House of Commons, — the Moderator

being here what the Speaker is in St. Stephen's. The galleries of the church are filled with ladies and gentlemen of the first respectability, who go in the moment the doors open and sometimes remain eight or nine hours. There are spirited debates, and, what you would not expect in so grave an assembly, peals of laughter that make the house shake. In short, every man considers this meeting as a fit opportunity for exhibiting his whole stock of wit and wisdom. I very much regretted having only one day to spend there: nothing entertains me so much.

The early part of the season has been cold here: but spring is now coming in a robe of richest verdure, — the deeper for being so long repressed; and our little garden begins at last to smile.

Pray desire your son to inquire in Dublin College for a young man — Dr. Singers or Singer, — who, being introduced to me on a tour to Scotland, pleased us all exceedingly with the power and variety of his conversation. With all his vivacity, his principles and opinions appeared to be very correct in every particular: I should like to hear more of him. I am, dear madam, yours very sincerely,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLXXIX.

TO JOHN RICHARDSON, ESQ., OF PITFOUR, PERTH.

Edinburgh, 3d June, 1816.

My dear Sir,

Your last letter to me was rendered more precious by the circumstance of its being written so soon after an alarming attack, of a nature calculated to make your friends, though not yourself, very uneasy: yet I have known those occasional shocks seem to act as a stimulant, rather reviving than impeding the animal functions;—so, at least, it was with my beloved and venerated mother-in-law, who rather exceeded the age of eighty when she was called home by the God she faithfully served, to share the salvation purchased by that Redeemer in whom she humbly trusted. She too, like me, was visited with very severe afflictions in the loss of promising grown-up children; but, alas, how different their effect! I think my heart grew more cold and hard with every new wound: that was not her case, for she lived above the world, and gave me a bright example which I have not been enabled to follow.

The wonder of the day, who engrosses all conversation, and excites all astonishment here, is Dr. Chalmers. You would see, in the Edinburgh newspapers, what a sensation was produced by his sermon preached before the Commissioner on Sunday: no one was disappointed, though expectation was raised as high as possible. There is one high distinction Dr. Chalmers possesses,—that is, making the genuine doctrine of

the Gospel respectable even in the eyes of worldly men, by the masculine energy and simple dignity of his style, which never stoops to blandishment or the meretricious embellishments of a studied and fashionable eloquence. Nor does he degrade the lofty theme entrusted to him by using phrases hackneyed and familiar in the mouths of those who diminish the force of truth by using the language profaned by ignorant enthusiasts. This preacher has no phraseology whatever; he uses the first words that occur: these are sometimes homely enough, but as he warms in his subject his style rises with it, and varies from sublimity of the simplest and noblest kind to pathos irresistible, without weakness or verbiage; and all this with a manner far from elegant, an accent highly provincial, and a voice and countenance not by any means calculated to aid his elocution. He will, by the wonderful faculties entrusted to him, exalt and ennoble the style of Gospel preaching, which in feebler hands has afforded scope to profane ridicule.

Dr. Chalmers and Lord Byron are at present the two wonders of the age,—one for the exaltation, and the other for the perversion of those high gifts that bring man nearest to superior intelligences. The contrast is instructive. Dr. C., without birth, rank, polished manners, wealth or outward consequence,—by the sanctity of life and doctrine which hallows his high talents, is an object of high respect and veneration to those pre-eminent for learning, rank, and wit. Lord Byron, with powers of mind that dazzle and astonish,—with rank, learning, youth, distinguished personal graces, wealth and most elegant manners,

is regarded with disapprobation by all right-thinking people.

I think there are symptoms every where of a happier era for mankind. It is pleasant to anticipate the dawn of that order which may rise out of confusion, and demonstrate that all things work together for good. I am, dear sir, most faithfully yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLXXX.

TO MRS. D. H. RUCKER, MELROSE HALL, PUTNEY.

Edinburgh, 4th June, 1816.

My dear Madam,

I congratulate you on the splendid success of your Charity-fair. If ever you have another, I hope to add to it a curious specimen of a little art of imitation, of which I claim the title of inventor: I thought to do it this year, but so many things occupied my time and thoughts that I could not overtake it. It is really pleasant to see such happy and useful results arising from the by-play, as one may call it, of female ingenuity, and to think that the ingenious trifles which amount to little more than elegant idleness in some, should lay a foundation for the most important and strenuous usefulness in others, by enlightening and regulating the young minds thus furnished with instruction, — minds which might otherwise have grovelled in that ignorance which

precludes every enjoyment but those arising from gross and blunted sensation.

This brings that wonder of the day — of the age I should rather say, — Dr. Chalmers, to my mind. All the wits and philosophers of Edinburgh, when he attended the General Assembly last week, bowed down to the power of his mighty genius, and heard from him, with reverence and admiration, truths which they would have sneered at from one less rich in the highest powers of intellect. He made a speech in the Assembly against pluralities, which delighted and amazed all his hearers; even Jeffrey — the fastidious Jeffrey, though retained on the opposite side, owned that he never in his life heard such a torrent of luminous and powerful eloquence. But I should tell you his disadvantages. Were it not for an air of manly simplicity, you would call his countenance, not merely plain, but vulgar; his voice and the worst Scotch accent are equally unfavourable. His language rises and falls with his subject: sometimes he uses familiar and national phrases, with a carelessness that shows his indifference to all studied elegance; but with the importance of the subject his style becomes forcible, elevated to the loftiest sublimity or melting into the tenderest pathos. His reasonings, too, — for he always reasons, — are so close, that there is no escaping their force. Determined to preach only Christ and him crucified, he has not a single word of that cant which has been abused and degraded either by well-meaning ignorance or dangerous pretension.

I have been led by this surprising meteor of eloquence into a digression from what I first meant to

tell you. It was of a sermon preached lately by Dr. C. for the Sons of the Clergy, which I, despite of my wonted horror at crowds, attended at the risk of suffocation. The text was — "It is more blessed to give than to receive." After commenting on the joy of giving — the Godlike delight of bestowing, — Dr. Chalmers began to justify the ways of God to man by showing us that this exalted gratification was by no means confined to the rich; that the poorest person who had health to labour, and sense and knowledge to look to consequences, might, in the sight of God and his angels, appear highly beneficent when he denied himself comforts and in many instances necessaries, in order that he might not encroach upon the fund which flows from the hands of the charitable to the necessities of those less able for exertion, — when he assists by his labour of love those that he cannot otherwise benefit, — and when, by the exertion of a noble self-denial, he lays by a little sum to educate his children in the knowledge and fear of the Almighty. . . . . What injustice I feel myself doing to the wonder-working powers of this extraordinary man. But the conclusion is meant to strengthen the argument for that instruction which your institution bestows on the poor. It is almost too much to expect from human nature, that a creature who knows no higher enjoyments than those of sense, should not snatch at the small portion of those within his reach; whereas an enlightened being, who knows something of the pleasures of intellect, — to whose informed mind the blue sky and green earth smile, as expressing the equal love of the uni-

versal Father,—who knows that there is a rich reward laid up for those who endure patiently these light and momentary afflictions which form the prelude to transcendent glory,—and who feels the faith which appropriates that purchased felicity;—such a being, I say, must be qualified, in a very superior degree, to taste the pleasure of giving, which Dr. Chalmers so powerfully described as the poor man's highest eulogy.

* * * * * *

In case of misapprehension, I must now tell you all that Miss C—— desires. It is merely to get admission to some collection in London, and to be permitted to copy, for her improvement, some of the admired paintings of the distinguished masters. She is a person of worth and genius; but before this reverse of fortune took place she was very much looked up to and respected in a certain little circle in the adjacent town of Port-Glasgow. The homage there paid to her genius, benevolence and real virtues, made her confident of general esteem and careless of forms,—saying whatever came uppermost, and putting on whatever lay next her, without regard to custom or opinion. All this is now against her. She does not mean to settle in London, but merely to improve herself.

I must reserve to my next the history of the few days I spent at beautiful Ammondell, the residence of Mr. Henry Erskine, who is married to my friend Miss Munro that was. I have much which I must defer. I once hoped to tell you all this in person; but the sunbeams that promised to gild my decline have shut in one after another, and the visit to you with

the rest. I have been enabled to bear the bitterest sorrow: shall I then repine at a privation of what I only hoped? yet I could have wished otherwise. Adieu, dear excellent friend: convey my respects to Mrs. Gardiner, whom I truly do respect, and to Mr. R. I am ever, most affectionately and most gratefully yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLXXXI.

TO MRS. BROWN, ST. VINCENT PLACE, GLASGOW.

Edinburgh, 3d July, 1816.

My dear Mrs. Brown,

I have to acknowledge the kindness you have shown to my young people, who I fear have occasioned you a great deal of trouble from first to last. They have returned, however, deeply impressed with those feelings towards you which I should wish them to have.

I am particularly pleased with your all having an opportunity of knowing my daughter Moore, whose cold and distant manner shows her to great disadvantage to strangers; yet she is so very true, so high principled, and so warm in her concentrated affection to those she does think worthy of esteem, that no one is the object of stronger attachment to her few friends, and no one cares less for having many. I think it but duty to say this for one who will say very little for herself,—I mean whose valuable qualities are not the most popular ones. Miss Glassell, on the contrary, is

that good wine which, according to an old saying, needs no bush: her quick observation, strong sense, and cordial frnakness, make way at once; and it does not detract from the merit she really possesses to say that they make way the faster from that affluence of which she really makes a very good use. Her manners would not do so well with a person whose heart could not show itself by effects: she has many good qualities, and some noble ones.

I went to Stirling, as you know, to meet the girls. There is no describing the delight with which we beheld your good and kind-hearted son Robert awaiting our arrival. I was glad on his own account, and more particularly on that of my mournful protegé poor Mr. Henry, whose filial piety much embittered the load of affliction which he was trying to lessen by change of place. In a strange land he feels the little kindness of the only person who takes much interest in him; and I still have the liveliest remembrance of the kindness I received from his family, with whom I was a great pet during my residence with aunt Schuyler at Albany.

It was truly on "a rich and balmy eve" that we set out from Stirling for Dunblane, and the luxuriant beauty of the intervening country, under the mild beams of a fine declining sun, was far beyond any power of description. I always very much liked Dunblane; the remains of the fine Cathedral throw a kind of solemn and religious gloom over the place, and the memory of Bishop Leighton in a manner sanctifies the scenery. A very fine walk, shaded by the tallest laurels I ever saw, and called the Bishop's

Walk, runs along the romantic banks of the Allan, till it joins the more cheerful and modern improvements of Kippenross, where all is soft and smiling, and set off by the moors and mountains that form the back-ground beyond it. There are half a dozen pretty, genteel houses surrounded with far prettier gardens, in the town, where the under-sheriff and his brother, who is librarian to Bishop Leighton's excellent library, and postmaster besides,—the clergyman, and a wealthy architect who has a fine house and garden, all reside and form the aristocracy of the town. In such a humble aristocracy I should have included the schoolmaster, who is a man of letters, and the collector. Now it is this paucity of gentility that, with many shadowy remembrances, attaches me to Dunblane, where the good feeling which simplicity and primitive manners call forth from an unvitiated mind is every now and then excited by those broad blue bonnets and clean check aprons which seem here to have found their last refuge.

You would be delighted, as I was, if you saw the retreat in which I left Miss E. and Isabella at Dunblane. They lodge in the house of Mr. Gilfillan, a seceding clergyman, of great sanctity of manners and a more cultivated mind than is usually found among sectaries. . . . . What a luxury of a drive I had back to Stirling, solitary but not cheerless, for lovely nature in her calmest aspect breathed serenity around me, and I felt satisfaction in thinking how very much the friends I left behind were pleased with their situation. I considered it a duty to call upon all my old acquaintance in Stirling, and in so doing wore

out my spirits and strength, so that I have not been very well since I came home. I must now conclude with many and sincere regards from your late guests, which, after appropriating your own share, you will distribute as due. I am, with true affection, dear Mrs. Brown, much yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLXXXII.

TO MRS. GORMAN, KILMORE, IRELAND.

Edinburgh, 12th September, 1816.

My dear Madam,

I am just recovered from a severe attack of the erysipelas in my face. I thankfully retract the expression *severe;* it was, I am told, comparatively mild, but owing to the excellent health with which I have been almost miraculously favoured for many sad years, and my general habit being free from every tendency to inflammation, I was astonished at this attack, and felt the confinement and the suspension of my usual pursuits fully as much as the pain.

Thank you for giving me a scene of animated domestic peace at Kilmore, to which I may turn my aching eyes when clouds oppress me. How very much you have to be thankful for. There are two species of deception that seem, for some good purpose no doubt, entwined with our very nature:—most of us are sure we shall not die soon, and very certain that if we were rich we should be comparatively happy. Man-

kind may be divided into two classes. —The first of these sedulously strive against the current of custom, and the breeze of passion, and steer their vessel onwards towards happier hopes and higher attainments: they think that greater wealth would enable them to do more good to others, and that prolonged years would give them more time to fulfil the great purposes of self-conquest, and growth in grace, for which this state of probation was intended. The other, again, float carelessly down, thoughtless of the ocean towards which they are hastening; and, obeying the impulse of every passing gale, flatter themselves that increased wealth would purchase, and added years prolong those pleasures that bound their mean desires. Hourly observation of the disappointment that each class experience does not extinguish those restless wishes after a high responsibility in one case, and deeper condemnation in the other: but thus hopes are cherished and activity promoted among the crowd that make up the living and moving mass around us. Yet I think it a peculiar felicity if one has a little bark moored in a quiet harbour from which mere worldly hopes and fears are in a great measure excluded, to be enabled to think and act under a sensible and permanent conviction, — first, that the place allotted to us is the best, and next, that we shall be called from it in the time best for ourselves and others. I am comforted to think that you have the same deep conviction of being placed in the situation of all others best suited to you; and that unerring Wisdom will regulate the time of your removal from it.

I am quite of your opinion as to the too uniform splendour of Felicia Hemans. She keeps us hovering constantly on the wing, like birds of Paradise, for want of a perch to repose upon. This cannot be said of the honest Lake poets: you may there find obscure and languid places, where you may not only perch but nod, till some of those beautiful passages which redeem the poppy-covered waste occur to wake you. Did ever I tell you of one of said poets we have in town here, indeed one of our intimates — the most provoking creature imaginable? He is young, handsome, wealthy, witty; has great learning, exuberant spirits, a wife and children that he doats on (circumstances one would think consolidating), and no vice that I know, but, on the contrary, virtuous principles and feelings. Yet his wonderful eccentricity would put any body but his wife wild. She, I am convinced, was actually made on purpose for her husband, and has that kind of indescribable controlling influence over him that Catherine is said to have had over that wonderful savage the Czar Peter. Pray look at the last Edinburgh Review, and read the favourable article on John Wilson's City of the Plague. He is the person in question; and had any one less in favour with them built such a city in the region of fancy and peopled it in the same manner, they would have *plagued* him most effectually.

I am going to the country to-morrow to visit Mrs. Liston, our late Ambassadress at Constantinople. Few are equally well worth knowing, and from her vigorous and intelligent mind much is to be expected after such a sojourn.

I have much more to tell, but have not the *organ* of abridgement, as people say now about every thing. Believe, however, that I am with great regard, yours most truly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLXXXIII.

TO MRS. FLETCHER, TADCASTER, YORKSHIRE.

Edinburgh, 21st September, 1816.

My dear Madam,

Though after a gloomy and enfeebling confinement I have little to communicate that can amuse you, I still cannot let my friend Angus go without a bill of health at least. This is for me an unusual beginning; but I ought not to complain, now that the cause of complaint is removed.

I was preparing, in consequence of the earnest solicitation of some of my friends, to set out for England, where I proposed staying two months among friends whom I should see most probably for the last time. This was prevented by the arrival of a young Highland heiress, Miss Fraser of Foyers. This was too important a charge to leave; and when you know all that I shall tell you about this creature so rich in the best gifts of the Almighty, so artless and so amiable, you will not wonder to find me very much engrossed by her. My not going to England proved a happy circumstance, for just about that time I was attacked with the erysipelas.

I had a visit and an invitation from the Arch-critic lately: he looks well, and smiles graciously. I had likewise a visit from one I regretted not being able to see,—Mrs. .... On hearing Mary's and Mr. Jeffrey's account of her, my disappointment was much softened: the first described her as a woman pleasant but rather artificial in her manners; and the next, as something all made up of white satin and roses, very finical, and determined to be young and charming in spite of time, and, after all, a person who has no bad qualities and many good ones, but has long since taken leave of nature. I had, however, a visit from another lady, less satiny and less flowery, who has carried good homely nature, associated (as it seldom is) with diplomacy, through America, much of Europe, and part of Asia, and brought it back unchanged. You know already that I mean Mrs. Liston*, who really looks very well, and, you may suppose, must be more entertaining than ever.

I felt a gleam of pleasure lighten across my dark chamber at hearing that you and Mrs. Dixon met so often in Yorkshire. How congenial must she and your daughter Grace have felt, with so much talent, so much heart, and so much enthusiasm on both sides: I think she would be quite a sunbeam to you all. The Miss Fanshawes, too, were to meet her in the course of their northern tour: I should have been so pleased that you had seen them, and so charmed that they had seen you: good people should know each other. My young people join in best regards to

* The Lady of Mr., afterwards Sir Robert Liston, Ambassador at Constantinople.

yours: I hope you will soon come to rejoin the rest of your family. Believe, dear Madam, that your return will be an unspeakable comfort and pleasure to your affectionate and faithful humble servant,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLXXXIV.

TO MRS. HOOK, THE CLOSE, WINCHESTER.

Edinburgh, 1st October, 1816.

My dear Friend,

You will be glad to know that I have now recovered from my late severe attack of illness. . . . . Last week a lady offered me her carriage for an airing: somehow, I never go out without missing some one whom I wish to see, and never am visible at home without wasting time with such persons as try my patience, and would exhaust yours. On my return I found that Mr. Morritt of Rokeby, one of my greatest favourites, had been calling on his way to Ross-shire to visit the Seaforth family. Miss Fanshawe wrote to me some time before, announcing her intention of coming northward with her sisters, and you cannot think how much I was delighted with the thoughts of seeing them here. But it was not to be: they are like the conies, a feeble folk, and there was so much to arrange after their father's death, that it was late in the season before they set out. I was quite mortified that the weather should have been so unpropitious to them who never before took a flight of any length from home. Mr. Morritt told Mary, however, that

they had staid a week with him and were delighted with their excursion, and that they had proceeded on to join Mrs. Dixon in Westmoreland. Mrs. Dixon, too, met Mrs. Fletcher in Yorkshire where she has been for some weeks with her aunt. Sure you have heard of Mrs. Fletcher,—of her beauty, talents, and benevolence. My change of residence has brought me nearer her, which I consider as a great privilege, for cordial intimacy is to me the balm of life; and the nature of society here, though remarkably pleasant upon the whole, almost precludes that enjoyment. But a *crony* is to me indispensable.

You would hear of Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton's death, and see the eulogium with which Miss Edgeworth honoured her memory. She was always kind and friendly to me; and, with those powers of understanding which all the world acknowledged, she had a warm and kind heart. Besides depriving society of an estimable and benevolent member, her departure makes a blank not easily filled. Others were more confined to the society of their relations, or those with whom business connected them; but at her house a more selected circle met, where there really was little or no town gossip: the topics were literary or general; and a stranger once introduced there, was immediately received into all the accredited company of the place.

Remember me warmly to your father, and tell me how he likes Walter Scott's novels, which greatly refresh the spirit of all old Scotch with the revival of old times and manners. . . . . I intend to appear and show my gratitude to the Archdeacon in an epistolary

form shortly. With love to you and yours from me and mine, I ever am, dear, true and kind friend, yours affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLXXXV.

MRS. GORMAN, CHARLOTTEVILLE, IRELAND.

Edinburgh, 16th November, 1816.

My dear Madam,

You will not wonder that I am greatly pleased with what you tell me about your dear Charlotte, and the prospect of rational felicity which is opened to her; for I am sure you do not consider my partiality for the middle rank of life as mere declamation. On that subject I am clear, and my heart assents to what my reason dictates. To me the two extremes of life are now well known: I have had the closest view of my inferiors, without being in any instance degraded to their level; and latterly I have also had pretty near views of my superiors,—of the best of them,—for it is only such that seek the society of the independent on motives honourable to themselves: and had I the world to begin again, I would certainly prefer the station in which most freedom and peace are to be found, and in which I am rejoiced to find that your daughter's lot is to be cast. I have a strong presentiment that she will be as happy as this state of trial will admit.

Before I began this letter I read over that one of yours in which you depict with so much feeling and

simplicity, your past life, and set before my eyes that region of peace over which your view extended while you were bringing me so near you. What an embellishment is the birth-place of Wellington to your peaceful landscape! There is nothing to me so touching and interesting as what bears the traces of mind, —that emanation from above. Those characters born to redeem and bless the age in which they appear, I feel like rays from some exalted orb that shed sweet influence on the world below. This applies particularly to him whose wars were only meant to procure the lasting and general peace which has succeeded.

Have you seen the last number of our Northern Review which strips the tomb of your countryman Swift of all the trophies with which wit or patriotism have hitherto decked it? What the reviewer says of his cruelty to his "Platonic Seraglio" is, I fear, too forcible to be evaded. The bitterness on that point is allowable, but the rancour on the score of politics savours exceedingly of party spirit, with which indeed that able work is deeply tinctured. It is very difficult to defend the Dean on any particular from so strong a statement of stubborn facts: but having, for forty years past, been accustomed to have an unaccountable kind of partiality for "Dean, Drapier, Bickerstaff, or Gulliver," I cannot quite get quit of it at this ripe age; so I shall just go on never minding, as a friend of mine always advises one to do in petty perplexities. . . . . This critical corps are about to lose one of the most able of their number, who is by far the most amiable. Horner is gone to Italy for his health, with very little hope of recovery: he is

paying the penalty of premature talents and unwearied application. There is a tone of candour and refined benevolence in the reviews of his writing of a very different colour from the rest of the web.

Pray let me be kindly remembered to all your family, and particularly offer my respects to your venerable mother. My daughters are very well, and my son very diligent and wonderfully fond of his thorny profession. Adieu, my dear madam: tell me of your health, and your children, as if you had always known me, and believe that nothing that concerns you can be indifferent to your sincere friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLXXXVI.

TO JOHN RICHARDSON, ESQ., OF PITFOUR, PERTH.

Edinburgh, 19th November, 1816.

My dear Sir,

I am now nearly recovered from my late illness. The blessing of health has been accorded to me in no common degree, ever since my standing alone at the head of a family rendered it doubly important. I hope I am duly thankful for this high privilege; and though it should be in some degree withdrawn, or rather suspended, still I should be thankful.

I do not know whether you have so far detached yourself from worldly matters as to take no interest

in public affairs. The year 1814, however, forms such an era in the annals of time, that I think you must needs "absent you from felicity awhile," to look back on a crisis so fearfully important to those who are doomed to remain here longer, "and in this harsh world draw their breath in pain." You will find a clear, accurate, and most dispassionate detail of the wondrous events crowded into that short period, in the Edinburgh Annual Register for that year. It is written by Walter Scott, and does as much honour to his sound judgment and discrimination as some of his past writings have done to his genius and creative power of fancy. One could scarcely imagine a poet to have so much common sense as to write prose with such elegant simplicity: and his praise and blame are distributed on both hands, as if no such monster as party had ever existed.

There is a new publication—at least new to me,—that I have read with extreme pain; it appears to me like the violation of a sanctuary,—I mean the little memoir of Cowper, which he wrote, as it should appear, for the perusal of the Unwin family alone, and perhaps Mr. Newton. It details his temptations and private experiences, giving at the same time a minute account of his attempt at suicide, and of certain very particular manifestations of the Divine favour that he felt at the very period when his mind does not appear to have been in a state of perfect sanity. The excuse alleged for drawing the veil from woes and weaknesses so sacred as those of Cowper appears to me a feeble one; the ostensible motive for the publication being to show that religion, far from being the cause,

was indeed the cure of Cowper's mental disease. It was clearly not the cause, for a predisposition to it was evident both in his nervous frame and too sensitive mind; and it was not religious terrors, but an apprehension of public disgrace and pecuniary evils, that brought on his malady. It would, however, be furnishing matter for a sneer to the scoffer to say that religion cured him, when he had such long and terrible relapses. Those intimate communications of the Spirit, which he mentions so minutely, were only suited to the circle for which they were first intended: the line between imagination and the suggestions of a hallowed spirit is so difficult to ascertain in the shadowy state of his mind at that awful crisis, that it is not a sufficient foundation for a hypothesis. I think that all disclosures of this nature are unsafe, —I mean disclosures to the world: there is always something so mysterious or dubious in the secret intercourse betwixt the soul of man and his Maker, that such comunications cannot be distinctly defined to others, and are a stumbling-block to those who walk in darkness, waiting for the promised light. . . . . I must conclude with affectionate and sincere wishes that your light may shine more and more unto the perfect day,—and I am, dear sir, your sincere and grateful friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLXXXVII.

TO MRS. RUCKER, YORK HOTEL, BATH.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 30th November, 1816.

I am extremely concerned to hear of good Mr. Rucker's illness; I hope by this time he has begun to reap the benefit of the Bath waters. He is such a patient sufferer in illness, and his health is of such importance to so many, that he engages no common sympathy when he is ill.

Besides the deep interest that I must take in the comfort of a person of so much real worth, to whom I am bound by so many ties of gratitude, I have a selfish reason for regretting this visitation; for, if you really do propose so long an exile from your happy and splendid home, I cannot entertain a hope of seeing you again in this world. There is nothing more useless and impertinent than dictating to people about such parts of their conduct as must necessarily be the result of their own taste and inclination, of which no other person can properly judge. Yet though I must not rashly judge where I am incompetent to decide, I may be allowed to wonder that you, so amply supplied with every thing that can make existence a blessing, so rich in real friends — a treasure seldom allotted to the prosperous, — and seeing on every side the plants of your own beneficence thriving round you, — should leave all this to pass years in foreign countries, where you must feel, what you could never feel at home, a chilling absence of that warm sentiment of affection which has always met and followed

you wherever you went in your own country. I shall not think you from home while you are at Hamburg, where every house and heart is open for your reception: but as you advance into warmer climates you will meet with what you are less than any people I know accustomed to — the cold weather of the heart. Though I croak so dismally in the bitterness of parting too probably for ever, yet, if once you were luxuriating among the vineyards of the South, under their bright skies and surrounded with an atmosphere of gaiety and fragrance, I should probably imagine myself sharing your enjoyments, and delight myself in thinking you delighted.

I ventured out in a chair last night to Mrs. Miller's, where I met a very pleasant, select party, and of moderate size. There was, in particular, a Miss Bolland, who is on a visit to Sir William Fettes. I have very much lost the wish of seeing strangers, but she is one that I think none can see without a wish to meet her again. She has, in the first place, a very fine person, with much unconscious dignity in her air and aspect, a countenance noble and almost beautiful, — mental in no common degree, — and illuminated by large black liquid eyes, full of thought and feeling. She is very intelligent and quite natural, admires fine scenery and elegant literature without the least affected rapture: in short, I have not of long seen any one that pleased me half so well. But, by way of contrast, I shall speak of a countrywoman of yours, as unlike her as possible, — Mrs. E. She is come to our close neighbourhood; and when Major E. dines in the Castle, now and then, with his old regiment,

we bring poor Mrs. E. here, that she may not be lonely in her lodging. She is so affectionate, poor soul, and so glad to find herself among us, that one bears her absurdity for the pleasure of witnessing her enjoyment. She is the only great fool I ever knew who is humble and conscious of inferiority. She thought that being a wife would bring her up to the level of others, and was therefore most impatient to be married. Still she found she was not quite like other people, and began to grow a little peevish at the discovery. She is now far advanced towards the state of maternity, which has put her in great spirits, and she seems to think it the finest thing imaginable to suffer the penalty of Eve. Her husband is handsome, has good language, and narrates any thing that has happened within his observation with the ease and distinctness that belongs, by a kind of privilege, to military people. He is a great *gourmand*, I am told; and, notwithstanding his plausibility in relating easily what he has seen and heard, has not otherwise a mouthful of sense further than that kind of instinct of self-preservation which teaches him to take care of himself and his wife, and go through the common forms of society. We are all in turn asked to dine with them, but no one goes except my son, who is highly amused with the peculiar mode of felicity given to this singular couple whom every one declares exactly made for each other. *She* looks up to him as a person of singular wisdom and correct judgment. *He*, to be sure, does not think her wise; but not exactly comprehending what we mean by wit and humour, far from being angry at people

laughing when she speaks the most extraordinary nonsense, he joins heartily himself, and only thinks her very original and eccentric — consequently entertaining. A couple so handsome, foolish, good humoured, and happy, is rarely met with; but description can give you no idea of them. We imagine that their tête-à-tête conversations consist of retrospection and anticipation, and that the objects of these are yesterday's and to-morrow's dinners.

I resist the impulse that would lead me to end where I began, by fretting and growling at your proposed long absence. Convey a thousand blessings from us all to Mr. Rucker, and pray with our united voices that he may give us one sight of him before the sea shall flow between us. He must absolutely see us before he sees the Venus de Medicis, for he will not endure the sight of us afterwards. I am, my dear friend, yours, most gratefully and affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLXXXVIII.

TO MRS. SMITH, OF JORDANHILL, GLASGOW.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 10th December, 1816.

Being a little hurried, my only motive for putting you to the trouble of a letter now is to ask whether you received a packet of mine which was given to Mr. Kerr to frank, who is the worthiest and kindest of beings, but sometimes very forgetful. It

contained some letters for others as well as one for yourself; and I am anxious as to its safety. . . . . .

I must now tell you of a very theatrical adventure, which happened before several witnesses, to whom of course it was very amusing. You must know it is thirty years and upwards since any body thought of kissing my hand. Judge then my confusion, and astonishment, when, calling one day lately at Lady Charlotte Campbell's, a very handsome, fashionable young man asked if I was Mrs. G. of Laggan. Hearing I was, he flew across the room, — said I was one of the persons in Scotland he most wished to see, and kissed my hand rapturously — yes, rapturously. I looked at him to see whether folly or vanity had prompted this flourish, — that is, whether he was foolish enough to think me what I was not, or vain enough to suppose this would pass for a fine flight of enthusiasm. I saw so much sanguine simplicity in his countenance, that I concluded it to be a boyish flight. He then descanted on the poem of The Highlanders, as awakening his feelings and enthusiasm for Scotland at a very early age. I resolved to stay him out, and know who he was, as I had very imperfectly heard the name by which he was introduced. Lady Charlotte told me, to my still greater surprise, that he was of royal lineage; — in short, he is the Duke of Sussex's son by Lady Augusta Murray. His father and mother were married in Italy, and afterwards re-married when they arrived in England; so that the marriage is considered quite enough for conscience, though not for succession. There is, however, no legal bar to his inheriting, in good time,

the kingdom of Hanover, which, being a male fief of the empire, cannot descend to the Princess Charlotte. When he left the room, Lady C. and Sir James Riddell both agreed that this act of homage of his would be considered as the show of a coxcomb in any one else, but from the genuine enthusiasm and artlessness of Captain D'Este's character, it was in him quite natural and excusable. He called here a day or two after, and then the onerous cause of all this appeared. You must have heard me speak much of my late energetic and warm-hearted friend, Miss Anne Grant of Windsor. She had the most wild enthusiasm, I must call it, in my behalf that was possible even for that self-devoted being to entertain. She was intimate with Lady Augusta Murray, and took an affectionate interest in this boy, then twelve years old. She described him, indeed, as something quite extraordinary in the promise of excellence, both of person and mind. I know, now, that she gave a very favourable impression of me and of my poetical book to this youth, at the season when the fancy forms images the most vivid and most unsubstantial. I asked him, finally, to meet Lady Charlotte and a small party, who were here on Monday, where all passed off very agreeably.

I must not omit an anecdote, better than my own, about kissing hands. A young lady from England, very ambitious of distinction, and thinking the outrageous admiration of genius was nearly as good as the possession of it, was presented to Walter Scott, and had very nearly gone through the regular forms of swooning sensibility on the occasion. Being after-

wards introduced to Mr. Henry Mackenzie, she bore it better, but kissed his hand with admiring veneration. It is worth telling for the sake of Mr. Scott's comment. He said, "Did you ever hear the like of that English lass, to faint at the sight of a cripple clerk of session, and kiss the dry withered hand of an old tax-gatherer?" Such is the mockery of homage paid to that class of beings, who, as Pope justly observes, "are envied wretched, and are flattered poor." . . . . . See how I fill the sheet that was to contain a single query; but talking of one's self, there is no such thing as concluding. With warm good wishes from my household to yours, I am, dear friend, much yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CLXXXIX.

TO MRS. BROWN, ST. VINCENT STREET, GLASGOW.

Edinburgh, 7th January, 1817.

My dear Mrs. Brown,

I will write before the warmth of the present feeling is diverted into any other channel, for I am really bankrupt to my other correspondents; and you know that is a state in which people are apt to become very unfeeling: but I will make a private and a separate payment to you for auld lang syne. You have no notion how glad I should be to see any one introduced by you, though far less agreeable than the bearer of your last letter. I send my friends to you

with such fearless confidence, and you receive them so kindly, that I feel a relief in seeing some one to whom I can pay a small part of that still increasing debt of gratitude.

I certainly do give you credit for great liberality in being pleased with the Tales of my Landlord, that give so lively a picture of the dismal days when our ancestors contended, certainly with more zeal than judgment, for their religion and liberties. There may be sanctified *individuals*, but there is no such thing as a sanctified *party:* the very spirit of party is adverse to Christian meekness, and if once it takes the sanction of religion, generates a high degree of spiritual pride, and presents piety to those who, as Mause says, are only in the court of the Gentiles in a most repulsive form. Yet your ancestor, if he was very sincere in his profession, rejoiced, I doubt not, with many more in the testimony of a good conscience. I should certainly have been a Covenanter had I lived in those days; but with my present feelings I should as certainly have been tortured with disgust and abhorrence of the ungodly acrimony and strange Jewish notions of many of my associates.

I am more learned in the costume of the Covenant than you can be well aware of. At Bogton, in Renfrewshire, where I spent some of my early days, I seemed to tread on the warm ashes of those troublous times, and heard much of the purity of life and self-devoted zeal of those truly good people,—for such indeed many of them were. I was just at the time of life, and in the frame of mind to be pleased and exalted by the pleasures and interests of life when

weighed in the balance with principle and the concerns of futurity. I diligently perused all the smoky little books that I found on the shelves of the cottages, and was deeply read in Peden's Prophecies, and felt a kind of affection for Auld Sandys. Yet, with all these good propensities, I could not help being much revolted at the narrow-minded scorn and aversion with which all other worshippers of the same God were regarded, if their forms differed. Their familiar addresses to the Divinity—I mean those upon record—shocked me; and I could not see room to hope that if they got all the power they aspired to, they would be better than their oppressors. Yet I still revered the sanctity of their lives, and the ardour of their zeal; but consoled myself for their manifold absurdities by remembering who hath said that "the children of this world are wiser after their generation, than the children of light."

There is certainly a most astonishing power of dramatic effect in these Tales. Shakspeare never drew low characters more naturally, or gave finer features of elegance and dignity to his heroes. Did you observe a motto to one of the chapters, marked Anonymous that is written by the author himself? —

> "Fill, fill the clarion, sound the fife,
> To all the sensual world proclaim, —
> One crowded hour of glorious life
> Is worth an age without a name!"

How nobly spirited and expressive! . . . . . I am just now deep in Woodrow's History of the Church; and in that record, preserved by a zealous Covenanter, find quite enough to accredit the details which the fertile fancy of Walter Scott has embellished not at all beyond the limits of probability.

Your son Frank's principles are too sound, and his heart too good to permit any circumstance to shake the one or harden the other. But without going to the West Indies for examples, I suspect that Paley may be justified by observing the effect slavery produces on both the oppressor and the oppressed, in those parts of Europe where, in the milder form of vassalage, it still exists. Adieu, dear friend: every one here thinks and speaks of you with affection and esteem. I am, ever truly yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXC.

TO MRS. HOOK, CONDUIT STREET, LONDON.

My beloved Friend, Edinburgh, 26th February, 1817.

It is utterly impossible that my heart should be chilled to you, "while aught on earth can pleasure give." It is evident from what you state, that a short and hasty letter of mine has not reached you. I think I sent it by some private hand, but I will do so no more. I am at present writing at my daughter Moore's bedside, who has been long confined with a slight but very tedious intermittent fever; — this is the third week of her illness, which you may well believe occasions me no small anxiety.

You ask me to tell you about Dr. Chalmers. I must tell you first, then, that of all men he is the

most modest, and speaks with undissembled gentleness and liberality of those who differ from him in opinion. Every word he says has the stamp of genius; yet the calmness, ease, and simplicity of his conversation is such, that to ordinary minds he might appear an ordinary man. I had a great intellectual feast about three weeks since. I breakfasted with him at a friend's house, and enjoyed his society for two hours with great delight. Conversation wandered into various channels, but he was always powerful, always gentle, and always seemed quite unconscious of his own superiority. I had not been an hour at home when a guest arrived who had become a stranger to me for some time past. It was Walter Scott, who sat a long time with me, and was, as he always is, delightful; his good nature, good humour, and simplicity are truly charming: you never once think of his superiority, because it is evident he does not think of it himself. He, too, confirmed the maxim that true genius is ever modest and careless; after his greatest literary triumphs he is like Hardyknute's son after a victory, when we are told,—

> "With careless gesture, mind unmov'd,
> On rode he o'wre the plain."

Mary and I could not help observing certain similarities between these two extaordinary persons (Chalmers and Scott): the same quiet unobstrusive humour, the same flow of rich original conversation, easy, careless, and visibly unpremeditated; the same indulgence for others, and readiness to give attention and interest to any subject started by others. There was a more chastened dignity and occasional elevation in

the Divine than in the Poet, but many resembling features in their modes of thinking and manner of expression. . . . . .

Captain d'Este's gallantry astonished me more than it did any one else: you would have been charmed to see how modest I looked upon it. My first thought, when I recovered my recollection, was of a Highlander of the lower class, but at the head of that, who put on his very best tartans, dirk and pistols, and came to get a sight of the Prince Adventurer as he passed through Strathspey to Inverness. Seeing a remarkably handsome and well-dressed Highlander coming forward, the Prince stretched out his hand as to a gentleman; the man took the proffered hand in a rapture of loyal gratitude, and then, wrapping up his own right hand in his plaid, he vowed it should never more be profaned by vulgar fingers; and he kept his word, for when I saw him, an old man, he always gave his left hand to those that offered theirs.

If you did but know the many interruptions amidst which I have written this letter, you would really think I made a meritorious effort to get near you. But now this is over I shall be quiet, and write you a family letter when Mary comes home. Give my kind love to all the members of your dear family, and add Isabella's to that of your unchangeable

ANNE GRANT.

Letter CXCI.

TO MRS. SMITH, OF JORDANHILL, GLASGOW.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 12th March, 1817.

I write oftener to you than to any other person; but the long interval of late has been partly owing to the very great occupation of time which Miss Fraser's illness, first, and then her marriage, occasioned — I mean the preparations for it. Now, according to the paltry custom of affecting to depreciate what one's self does, I should say I had nothing of consequence to communicate, and could not suppose it any enjoyment to you to read such insignificant letters as mine. I say no such thing, because I think long habit has made this kind of intercourse necessary to us both. A fine day in autumn would be as good as a fine day in spring, if the dropping leaves did not overpower us with the melancholy picture of decay; but the dropping of a correspondence begun with such fervour and carried on with such constancy as ours, would carry to the heart the still colder sensation of withered affections, and hearts losing some of their best and longest cherished feelings.

I do not know how I have wandered into this sentimental tirade, which certainly is very superfluous between you and me; but I began by vindicating the consequence I attach to my own letters in your eyes. You are by no means to suppose me conceited on such occasions, but should rather imitate the guileless indulgence of good Mrs. Fletcher. She went, with

another lady, to call on Mrs. Siddons when she was here last. The Tragic Queen began, as usual, to tell what some one had said in praise of her performances. When they came away, the lady observed to Mrs. F. how very few people could speak in that manner of themselves. Mrs. F. said, she just spoke of herself as she would do of any other person, with a kind of "grand simplicity;"—and she was quite serious in this generous construction.

You soothe my maternal feelings much by your praise of Mary, who is certainly a person generally liked and approved; and still more by the tribute you pay to the memory of those "who departed without their fame,"—who were called to another state of existence before they had any part to act in life that enabled them to do justice to that delicacy and elegance of mind, that generosity of feeling, and purity of integrity in which they were pre-eminent. To you I may be permitted to say, that those fair forms now mingled with the dust, were the dwelling of no vulgar minds; and that the manner in which I have been enabled to act a part in life, when every lonely hour finds me surrounded with the shades of the dear departed—renewing the anguish of separation—is as great a wonder to myself as it can be to any other person.

I was touched by a sentence in the last Edinburgh Review that spoke to my heart: I know you have the book, but for its beauty and interest it is worthy to stand alone. "Were we superstitious, we would think it was the fate of a certain gracefulness of character, personal and intellectual, to meet with an early

death, as if Providence would keep its image with us always young,—extinguished not decayed." I am superstitious, and I do believe it. . . . . Once again I must return to the Review. Was there ever such a creature as Jeffrey? His fertility of mind, and the ease and felicity with which he clothes original and powerful thoughts in terms the most graceful and expressive, never appeared more than in his last criticism on that splendid wretch Lord Byron. If I had not less though nearer matters to discuss, I could be tempted to say much more of these two wonderful personages; but I can at present only mention, with just approbation, the dignity with which the critic declines any allusion to the personal and domestic concerns of the poet; thus quelling idle and malignant curiosity, and giving a tacit lesson of self-respect to the illustrious egotist.

I must not forget to tell you that last week I dined out twice; first with Mrs. Brunton, and a very cheerful, artless party, mostly clerical; and next at Mr. Jeffrey's, where a comparatively small and select party, where every one could see and hear each other, proved very pleasant. At this house I greatly admire the respectable, yet simple and moderate style of the furniture, entertainment, &c. This in such persons is the perfection of good sense: it would be as absurd for people who, in the most literal sense of the phrase, live by their wits, to enter into rivalry of this kind with the great and wealthy, as it would be for these to try to excel Jeffrey in critical acumen, or Scott in poetry. By-the-bye, this "sweet-souled bard" seemed last week on the brink of the grave;

he was in sudden and imminent danger from an attack of inflammation, — he who scarcely ever knew before what sickness was.

I hope soon to receive an answer to this letter, which I must now close. With affectionate regards to all your circle, I remain, dear friend, yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXCII.

TO MRS. FLETCHER, CASTLE STREET.

Prince's Street, 25th April, 1817.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." These words were the first consolation of my afflicted spirit when I, like you, was called to yield back to the Almighty Giver one of the most unspotted of his creatures, — who seemed to pass through the world without receiving its taint or colour. You, dear afflicted friend*, are, in the midst of your deep distress, blessed above many women, in that you have brought forth, loved, and cherished an heir of salvation; who, after being the ornament of your family, the delight of your eyes, and the pride of your heart, has been summoned to the fruition of bliss unspeakable before the glow of her fine enthusiasm had been cooled by the blasts of adversity,—before her tender

* This letter was written soon after the death of Miss Grace Fletcher, daughter of Archibald Fletcher, Esq., Advocate, Edinburgh. See the following letter.

feelings were wounded by pangs such as you now feel, — and before the bright ethereal hue of her sensitive and imaginative mind was clouded by the worldly tincture that we, who are left to struggle through numberless, nameless petty evils, must needs encounter. You have had hitherto an undiminished flock, and were, I think, sensible of the goodness that continued them with you: I trust the time will come when you will bend with subdued and reverential awe to the Wisdom which has selected a spotless victim from among them. That is too much to expect at present; for, till nature has its way, you will calculate the treasure you possessed too fondly to consider that it is only laid up beyond your reach at present, to stimulate your endeavours and aspirations after the place where it is kept in safety. I fear I have no right but that of much suffering to come near you even in this way, while the wound is so recent. But you have old and true friends who will do the little all that human kindness can; yet I think none can feel deeper sympathy than your sincerely affectionate

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXCIII.

TO MRS. GORMAN, KILMORE, IRELAND.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 29th April, 1817.

I have the satisfaction to be able to tell you that Moore is much better, and begins to go out in a carriage. She does not yet come into company, but sits in the parlour and sees her particular friends there. Whenever she is able and when the weather favours, she will go for a little while into the country. . . . . .

I was under the necessity of having a small party last night, to keep scores with people long neglected before the Edinburgh world goes out of town. My spirit was not, however, with them: a dear and admirable friend now sunk under the pressure of a recent calamity, was ever present to my thoughts. Yet I went through the customary forms, I think, with apparent decency. . . . . Surely you have heard me speak of Mrs. Fletcher, the ornament, I may truly say, of this good town. For six-and-twenty years since her marriage she has lived unspoilt in unclouded prosperity, esteemed by all that knew her, her wealth flowing in from an unlooked-for source and flowing out again in liberal charity and benevolence, — the wife of a most worthy and respectable husband, and the mother of sweet-tempered and pure-minded children. But only one of them could be compared to her mother for talent, and that admired one is the victim first called for; she died, last week, of a typhus fever. Mrs. Fletcher felt this

first and agonising wound most acutely, but is gone this day to their country residence in Stirlingshire, where the resources of devotion and the fair undisguised face of nature will be her best remedies. My spirit goes with her, and the desire of soothing distress so poignant is ever uppermost in my mind. I conclude that it is the reflection of that mind that you look for more than amusement from my letters, and therefore I never apologise for filling them with whatever happens to be the predominant feeling.

I wish you would read the criticism on Lord Byron in the Quarterly Review. There are two extraordinary persons, whom it is now the fashion to be very sorry for, — one in St. Helena, the other, I think, holding sweet communion with the mountains in Switzerland. I, having much to do with my sympathy, think I can bestow it much better, and, in regard to these grand personages, am as indifferent as Launce's dog Crab, of whom he tells us that though the maid was weeping, and the cat wringing her hands, this hard-hearted cur shed not one tear.

I would tell you some other things if I were not drowsy. You owe this somniferous page to my sitting up to open the door for some absentees at a party; I really think it tyranny to keep servants up night after night to this hour. The bell rings, and so good-night with benediction. Yours ever,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXCIV.

TO MISS C. M. FANSHAWE, CAVENDISH SQUARE, LONDON.

My dear Madam, Edinburgh, 10th May, 1817.

* * * * * *

Now, dear madam, I have given you a tediously true account of my winter tribulations and occupations. I wonder at myself as much as you can wonder at me for taking up your time with what can so little interest you; but I saw that I had not only seemed most ungrateful to you, but had deprived myself of those much-valued answers, to obtain which is my chief object; — "I saw and pined my loss," — yet I hope not in vain, like the proud spirit who thus repined. If you have patience to read so far, you will find that I have been all this winter very like a certain class of matrons whom I used contemptuously to style "brood-hens;" who, when they are not sheltering their chickens under their wings, are perpetually chucking about them, and so satisfied with being good mothers that they never attempt to be any thing more.

What do you think of Lord Byron's latter poems? The Third Canto of Childe Harold, you find, has met its full share of admiration here. I, too, admire it exceedingly, though I think our indulgent critics pass lightly over much of false sublime. Sure you must have read the criticisms in the Edinburgh and Quarterly Reviews on his poems, — I mean the last productions of that wayward and wonderful mind.

I need not tell you that the first is Jeffrey's, nor that he has outdone himself in that exquisite essay, which I am never tired of admiring. You would also trace Walter Scott in the inferior, though pleasing and kind-hearted criticism in the Quarterly. After all, though Scott expends a great deal of good sense in reasoning down, and a great deal of good nature in soothing down the angry moods of the illustrious misanthrope, he could scarcely expect that he will succeed in persuading the man to quit what he actually puts on as an ornament. He is striving to deprive Parolles of his drum, or a fine lady of her rouge, and seems to forget that his lordship, like Iago, is nothing if not critical — or rather, he is nothing if not queru lus. When a child runs away merely to be pursued and cries merely to be pitied, it is in vain that you bribe it to come back and be quiet. Scott would fain infuse as much of his own honey into Lord B.'s vinegar as would at least make oxymel of it; but it will not do. His "Love's Labour lost" reminds one of the good-natured David Hume provoking Rousseau by trying to manufacture a little tranquillity for him.

Now I have reserved to the last what I was most anxious to say, — I mean in regard to that Scottish tour to which you are predestined. I cannot think when you derived so much pleasure from an excursion made in the worst season I remember, and very late in that bad season, that you will not renew and extend it when summer is all your own and the year has begun so auspiciously: I never remember the hedges green so early. Your coming here is an

habitual day-dream with me; and I never look at the Castle opposite to my windows and very near them, without thinking how you would contrast its rude antiquity with the gay bustle of Prince's Street. I think I see you coming down the Calton Hill, with our own romantic town in full view before you. Pray do me the favour to consult me about your northern arrangements. You will find the town empty: for me it has, till now, been much too full. This is our holy week; the next I go out of town, to be quiet with a convalescent friend, and to find leisure to answer many letters which I owe in different quarters. With kind respects to your sisters, I am, dear madam, affectionately yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXCV.

TO MRS. SMITH, OF JORDANHILL, GLASGOW.

Edinburgh, 29th May, 1817.

"My heart untravelled fondly turns to thee." This might be considered as the very burlesque of romance, when addressed from one old woman immersed in worldly cares to another daily occupied with the petty concerns of her grandchildren. But what I have been I shall be to the end of the chapter. My romance is not a wreath gathered from fiction and poetry, to adorn the spring months of life and wither

when these are past; it is part of myself—an evergreen. O that I might presume to style it an amaranth stunted in this bleak climate, but faded to bloom aloft.

I feel inclined to be lofty and pathetic at this moment, possibly from an infusion of Dr. Chalmers's spirit, whose sermon on the sympathy of angels with our fallen nature I have just been perusing with admiration ever new. You cannot think what contempt I feel for silly and worldly people (and are not all worldly people silly?) when I hear them say of any of those productions of genius which it exalts our nature even to contemplate, "I have read it already;" as if it had no other charm but novelty, or as if their opaque minds could take in, at a single reading, all that high-gifted spirits have produced either from intense thinking or a kind of lofty inspiration. When I find a book not worth reading, as soon as I am aware of the symptoms of mortality I throw it down to be no more opened; but the ever-living labour of "spirits never finely touched but to fine issues," I dwell upon and return to, again and again, with ever new delight. The second reading I find better than the first; and, after an interval, the third speaks to me with the accustomed voice of a friend, with whom one dwells on old stories, because they are old, and rich in kindly associations.

But now for an explanatory note to my motto at the top. I have beside me many letters from those excellent of the earth, whom I am pleased and proud to number among my correspondents; and yet, from the cares, fears, and perplexities of this past

season, my mind has really sunk into a chillness either of heart or ability, that makes answering them a labour that I begin with repugnance and quit with satisfaction. Yet I am always ready and willing to write to you, and take a certain pleasure in doing so when I feel weary and indifferent to most other things. Now I would take credit to myself for superlative constancy and kindness of heart, did not my officious conscience suggest that it is not mere constancy, but a mixed motive that makes me so alert and indefatigable in this correspondence. First, it favours my indolence, because I know your partiality is ready to meet my carelessness, and your habitual interest is awake to all my home details. Next, it flatters my vanity, because I know that yours is implicated with it; and that you are so accustomed to be vain of my success, that you will not willingly think me dull or flippant, for the credit of your own taste. You must not say, with Horatio, that "this is considering too curiously:" all self-examination ends in producing humility, — the virtue we most want yet least care to have.

I have now, since people are got well and minding their business, more leisure than I have had for a long time, — more than I wish, indeed, — though I do not like to have my mind agitated with fears and cares about the health and final settlement of my pupils, because such fever me and wear me out. Yet I often regret that, from the fashion of learning every thing, the hours of my young friends are so engrossed and divided that none are left for me to do what rather cheers and tranquillizes me, — to open and inform their

minds by conversing with them, or reading, with my own vocal commentary, such books with them as are best calculated to form their taste and fix their opinions. But the day flies, the evening comes; and that is too short, and too often broken in upon, to be of essential benefit.

Did I tell you of my two young Miss G——s? They are truly the ornaments of my household, and shall adorn some other letter. Ever unalterably yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXCVI.

TO JOHN RICHARDSON, ESQ., OF PITFOUR, PERTH.

Edinburgh,
6th August, 1817.

My dear and venerable Friend,

I have not written to you or much to any one of late, my attention being for some time painfully fixed on the decays of mortality in a young, lovely, and excellent person, who has been dear to me from her childhood; and now that the stroke has indeed fallen, I feel stunned by what I ought to have been prepared for. I must have mentioned to you Miss Fraser of Foyers, the sole descendant of that ancient house, who came here to live with me about this time last year,—not for education, for hers was completely finished under a very careful and accomplished

governess, and, though private, had furnished her with accomplishments and mental attainments that few could equal. More than all, she diligently remembered her Creator in the days of her youth.

I should be tedious were I to tell you half what is true regarding this fine mind unspotted by the world, and rich in all that the world does admire, and more so in what it ought to admire. But much is comprised in what her husband inserted in the newspapers where her death was recorded.—"She has left to her husband and her parents only the bitter remembrance of extraordinary talents, virtues, and affection." She had a cold here, not the least alarming and of which she fully recovered to appearance, but had a slight relapse before she left us. However, her father carried her north in the month of March: they were detained on the road by a dreadful snow-storm, and she was obliged to walk some miles through snow on the journey. The rest of her short sad story is soon told. She was married to Mr. Fraser of Balnain on her arrival at home; and a rapid decline hurried her away to the state for which her whole life had been a preparation. The manner in which a creature passes through that crisis which awaits us all must be interesting to every thinking being, more particularly those who seem to bear the stamp and impress of the redeemed. She was humble and sweetly patient under her sufferings; and though, as usual, intent on devotional exercises, did not hint any thing that could awake apprehension in those dear to her. The cough at last ceased from exhaustion, and her parents flattered themselves that she was better. She

was allowed a glass of wine daily, and, after being dressed and placed on the sofa, she drank it, but said afterwards she felt very cold. Her aunt ran to bring her a warm drink which she took;—they were all about her,—her husband sitting beside and supporting her. She looked round with a brightening smile, and said, "I am no more your wife!" He answered, playfully; "What are you, Jane, if you are not my wife?" She said, "They are taking me from you!", and, laying her head on his shoulder, added, in a faint voice, "Your wife is in Heaven!" They looked at her, and thought she had fainted; but in this cordial sentence her last breath had expired. Her mother immediately fell on her knees in earnest prayer; and both her parents acknowledged the Divine mercy in giving them such a child, and no less in removing one too much an idol, who has left them such an example, and gone before them with as firm a faith as any creature could have in a Redeemer, and as little of the stain of earth as could attach to a daughter of mortality. . . . . .

I am now, my dear sir, going to speak of myself, which I can never do without thinking of the cordials of human friendship, of no common order, which are mercifully sent to alleviate sorrows not few or small. My worthy friends Mr. and Mrs. Rucker are here with a favourite nephew and niece, to whom they wish to show the Highlands; and I have consented, at their earnest request, to join them in this tour. I shall be in Perth with them next week, but I scarcely hope to see you there, as I understand you are now at Pitfour. We set out to-morrow, and go by Dun-

fermline, resting the sabbath at Stirling, and thence proceed to Perth,—go north into Ross-shire, and return by the west route. I hope I shall be the better for this excursion.

I must now, dear sir, though approaching nearer to you, bid you farewell. Be assured I think of you very often, anticipating the happy change that awaits you, and earnestly desiring that my latter end may be like yours. That your tranquil and exemplary evening may be protracted as long as you can bless and enjoy your pious and dutiful relatives is, in the mean time, the sincere wish of your affectionate and obliged friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXCVII.

TO JOHN PETER GRANT, BREAKACHY, LAGGAN.

Ruthven, 20th August, 1817.

My dearest Boy,

I have risen earlier than even my usual earliness to address to you a line of affectionate consolation, which you will value as a proof of love from your only and tenderly-attached parent. The manliness you have shown in bearing pain, and the frequent and great pain which, from untoward accidents, you have had to bear, have broken you in to bodily suffering, and enabled you to give proofs of more than common fortitude. But the same spirit which you

have been enabled to show on such trying occasions must have been severely mortified by being stopped in the career of innocent and manly recreation.* I enter so fully into your feelings on this subject that I really regret this disappointment much more than all you suffer.

But, my beloved boy, I trust that the examples you have seen of the blessed departure of those who sought their Creator and loved their Redeemer in the days of their youth will have a due effect upon you, and that you will look upon this disappointment as a fatherly chastisement to bring home your wandering affections to Him who has saved you on different occasions when not merely your limbs but your life was in imminent danger. These checks and warnings you must take as given in mercy to call home your thoughts to Him who has tried and thus saved you. Consecrate, my dear boy, these precious hours of confinement to the regulation of your spirit, and drawing nearer to the God who has thus chastened and thus saved you. Look to his will in his Word daily, and pray earnestly that this accident may be for your spiritual good, however severe for the present. That God may bless and support you, and sanctify this present suffering for your future and eternal good, prays your tenderly affectionate mother,

ANNE GRANT.

* Referring to a severe accident her son had met with, which interrupted a shooting excursion in the Highlands.

LETTER CXCVIII.

TO MISS MOORE GRANT, HILTON, NEAR CUPAR.

Jordanhill, Glasgow,
20th September, 1817.

My dearest Moore,

I have just got your letter, and determine to answer it instantly, though I am not precisely in a writing frame at present.

I am glad, my dear child, that you found so much in my published letters to interest and please you. I have not for many years looked them over; and I am always ready to cry, "Ye tender, bitter recollections, spare me!" when I see them. Of their merits you and your sisters can judge better than others; for you best know — better even than I can myself — whether I generally feel and act as the author of such letters might be supposed to do.

I have had a letter from Mrs. Rucker, with a long postscript from sweet Anne Menzies whom I love for her good kind heart and her charming temper. Without brilliancy or the least pretension, she has an awakened and inquiring mind, not self-engrossed in the smallest degree. Throwing some light on what she saw and wished thoroughly to understand was one of my pleasures during our late Highland tour; and never was information more gratefully received. I made two excursions from Inverness with her, by ourselves only, with the attendance of Mr. S., who was merely a sort of gentleman-usher to us. The first was to Fort George, of which more hereafter;

and the second to Foyers to see the falls. The family were at church, being the fast-day of their Sacrament. I never saw grief more deeply impressed on a human countenance than it appeared in that of a young woman who is married to the innkeeper there. I asked if ever she had served at Foyers? She said "she had attended the young lady." She made no speeches; — for these her grief appeared too deep, and her character too modest. She was in decent mourning which was evidently no form. How much of the past and of the departed rushed on my mind! I got a guide to go with the young people to the falls; and in quiet solitude, amidst every thing that was sadly beautiful, and the rushing sound of mournful winds and many waters, that seemed to mourn over her whom all this unequalled scene should have called mistress, I gave vent to an agony of long-repressed sorrow, and all the past recurred to my mind of those gone before me, in a manner that nature could scarcely support. When calm enough to move, I took the advantage of the absence of the family to visit the grave of her who was indeed—

> "Snatch'd in her prime and in her bridal hour,
> And when high fortune with her lover smil'd,
> And when blind man pronounc'd her bliss complete."

What an enviable death was hers! She has left a world for which she was peculiarly unfitted to enter early on the possession of that immortality, towards which all her hopes and wishes had long aspired.*

* Mrs. Fraser (formerly Miss Fraser of Foyers) was interred in a beautiful and sequestered spot on a promontory projecting into Loch Ness, which formed the termination of one of her favourite walks, and where a monument has been erected to her memory, with an inscription by the writer of these Letters.

Remember me very kindly to your fair friend Mrs. Pearson, who you know has always been a favourite of mine. Adieu, my own dear Moore,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CXCIX.

TO MRS. GORMAN, SEYMOUR STREET, BATH.

Edinburgh, 7th November, 1817.

My dear Mrs. Gorman,

When I returned with Mr. and Mrs. Rucker from my late tour in the Highlands I remained only four days in Edinburgh, every moment of which was occupied by claims of business and duty. There are a number of afflicted and perplexed souls here and there who, without being classed among particular friends, look to me for consolation and help in all their petty distresses, and in whose favour I exert any little influence I possess with those who love me, and of whom I have no favour to ask for myself. To those, and for those I write, with the spur of conscience in my side; and to those calls I postpone such letters as I find pleasure in writing. Mrs. Rucker thinking it too likely we might not meet again, urged me to take a seat in her carriage to pay my annual visit to Jordanhill, where I go every year to be good and quiet, and see the purest virtue in the plainest dress, and the most abundant affluence enjoyed and employed with judgment and liberality. Living for a time in a family so good and so happy is like being on the

confines of a better world. In the midst of all this the scarlet-fever appeared in our house here for the first time. It attacked a lovely and excellent creature—Miss Davina Grant of Kincorth*, who is now, with her sister, an inmate of the house. Another young lady was likewise ill, but it was for Davina I trembled, for she is so delicate both in health and mind, and of such unearthly purity and disinterestedness that she seems like a flower fit for transplanting to the bowers of Paradise. You may judge how I trembled for her, and for the infection spreading. My sweet Davina and her friend recovered soon beyond expectation, but I was the prey of much anxiety in the mean time.

I am glad you are to winter at Bath, and feel convinced you will be the better for it. Home calls out such unceasing interest that it is a nervous place for an invalid. Your care will grow cooler in crossing the Channel.

I am indeed much pleased with your uncle's approbation, and that which you quote from the Review. The publication of these Letters cost me a severe pang; and I never open them but I feel as if it were to open the graves of the departed embalmed in them. It is a kind of compensation for all this pain when such as you speak of approve. Adieu, my dear madam, and believe me yours, faithfully and sincerely,

ANNE GRANT.

* Afterwards Mrs. Frederick Grant, of Mount Cyrus.

LETTER CC.

TO MRS. BROWN, ST. VINCENT STREET, GLASGOW.

Edinburgh, 8th November, 1817.

My dear Mrs. Brown,

I cannot let so ready a conveyance go without thus expressing my gratitude for all the kindness I received, and more that I could not stay to accept from you, could I have indulged myself to benefit by it. This will find you very busy, which, in other words, is being very happy when the business is of so pleasant a kind as regulating the establishment of a happy family that will open to you a new source of lively and pleasing interest, and where you will most probably see those seeds of sound instruction which you and others have sown, take root and flourish. You have ever been peculiarly happy in your children, and have every reasonable prospect of looking forward to a calm and bright decline.

Lady Elizabeth Boyle surprised us like an apparition yesterday: such a change on that glowing image of luxuriant health, and animated, intelligent beauty, was affecting to a degree that none who knew her less intimately than we can imagine. She said she could not leave town without seeing us all. She stayed more than an hour, part of which time we left her alone on the sofa, seeing her exhausted. She embraced us all at parting with a solemnity and tenderness that was quite overwhelming. Words cannot do justice to the patient, tender, and vigilant attention of her sister, Lady Isabella. I have great satisfaction in thinking however this illness may terminate, that it

will be productive of the happiest effects in being truly sanctified to the object of it.

The town is in an uproar about the Chaldee manuscript in Blackwood's Magazine, which contains in a very irreverent and unjustifiable form, a great deal of wit and cutting satire. The good are scandalised at the manner, the bad appalled and enraged at the matter. . . . . Literary gossip here holds the place of the petty personalities in little country towns, and of the more important concerns of foreign commerce in greater ones. Formerly these were very harmless contests; but people have got such a taste for war and strong sensations, that what they cannot find they will make. Jeffrey is the Buonaparte of literature here; and I think this confederacy of petulant young men seem encouraged to attack him by the fate of his prototype.

I hope the young people of your household, including your fair daughter, have gratitude enough to think with kindness of one who thinks very kindly of them. Adieu, affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCI.

TO MRS. SMITH.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, First day of the year 1818.

It is very cold, and scarcely daylight; the family have not assembled, and you are the first earthly being I have addressed this morning. Receive, then, my first congratulations on the opening of the year. Sad and solemn to me are those days that mark by their revolution our annual progress to our appointed home. It is not that it reminds us how much fewer must be the returns of those anniversaries; but the shades of the departed — my nightly visiters, the companions of my solitude — crowd round me on such a morning, fraught with images of the past.

It is well ordered that the same constitution of mind that preserves such vivid images of the past, is more than commonly open to more cheerful impressions, and reflects the passing forms of existing things with more distinctness, consequently producing a livelier interest. I am not affected with the air of the place, and do not mean to be metaphysical. I would only say what I have often thought, — with a deep sense of the wisdom which proportions our powers of endurance to our sufferings, — of the merciful allotment which gives more active powers of imagination to those whose acute feelings would be insupportable if not thus relieved. When I wish to call up many mercies to my remembrance on a day of recollections, I certainly reckon amongst them the blessing of hav-

ing a friend so faithful as yourself preserved to me, now more than forty years, with undiminished kindness; and that not merely existing in your own mind, but, by a kindly infection, shared by your whole family, who show their affection to you in attention to me. Let me not outlive yours, as I have done so many of my own; but may those who have cheered so many hours of declining life give, at its close, their sympathy to the survivors.

You know my dislike to very conspicuous goodness among females, which makes me shrink a little from Female Societies formed with the very best intention; not by any means as doubting the purity of the intention, or, in many instances, the beneficial results: but such societies so often include in their number officious gossiping characters, who derive a certain imagined consequence by overruling and interfering, and are so officious in raising contributions on all their acquaintance, and have so little of the charity of opinion, that I could never feel congenial with many of them, though there are some I hold in reverence. I think if I were wealthy, however, I should gladly "shake the superflux to them," as not doubting of their faithful administration, and intimate knowledge of those on whom they bestow; but having little to give, I bestow that little on the poverty with which I am well acquainted. See me now, however, a very anxious and busy member of a Female Society; but it is one that merely contributes instruction to those who endure much without complaint, and very much indeed before they are constrained to solicit. It is that for Gaelic schools; and I particularly entreat of Mr.

Smith to read the Reports which are in circulation from the Northern and Hebridean clergy, that he may be enabled to estimate duly the good these schools have done. Farewell, dear friend; may we be prepared for whatever awaits us in the ensuing year, — whether it be the good we see, or that which comes wrapt in a cloud, yet meant in mercy.

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCII.

TO MRS. GORMAN, SEYMOUR STREET, BATH.

Edinburgh, 15th January, 1818.

My dear Mrs. Gorman,

I grieve to tell you that my daughter Moore has been seized by another intermittent fever like that which made me so miserable last year: she struggled against it for some time, but was at length forced to give way and take to her bed. Fear and anguish took hold of me to a degree that I am ashamed to look back upon. There is a hoard of sorrow at the bottom of sorely tried hearts which hides itself alike from vulgar sympathy, and from that which might be wounded too deeply by knowing what is felt and suffered, — that is gilded over with smiles occasionally, and appears to sleep to those who possess no mastery over their own minds, but expose their wounds on the highway. But quiet as those recollections may seem for the time, the thought of a new calamity of the same nature rouses them in terrible array. I dreaded the coming on of a

hectic attack, which might in the end prove fatal; but I earnestly desire to thank God that this terror has passed away, and Moore is now, to all human appearance, in a fair way of recovery. Mary is just now on a visit to her friend Lady E. Boyle, who is decidedly better; and we soon expect Mary's return. . . . . I am glad you meet countrywomen at Bath, and still more so that there is a visionary hope of our meeting here. You must expect something very tall, very pale, and much more warm in heart than in manner. I am, dear Mrs. Gorman, very sincerely yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCIII.

MISS C. M. FANSHAWE, BERKELEY SQUARE, LONDON.

Edinburgh, 20th March, 1818.

My dear Madam,

I would fain spare you the pain of a recital of all that has engrossed and distressed me through the last gloomy winter. Yet I am so desirous to convince you of the high value I set on your letters, that I must concisely tell why I have so long delayed to write.

Suffice it then to say, that when your last letter arrived I was surrounded with sickness and distress, which is now happily passing away. My daughter Moore is much better, and is preparing to go to the country. We have taken a pretty cottage, lying in a warm hollow, in the land of Canaan—for so

is a sheltered and rural corner, about a mile from Edinburgh, called; and it will be to us a land of promise, for there we hope the health of our invalid will be re-established. . . . . .

After Mr. Crawfurd, of Auchinames, delivered your letter, I was impatient to see him, and sent to request the favour of his company in the evening. He came, and was every thing I expected — solid and refined, just what Ronald Crawfurd's grandson — that sweet singer of Tweedside — ought to be; and very like his cousins, the Macleods of Geanies, whose manners please me more than those of any family I know. I found he was far from a stranger in Edinburgh, being in the very centre of numberless friends and kinsfolk, — one cousin married to Dr. Gregory, another to Sir George Mackenzie, &c. You Anglo-Saxons have no conception how long and fine the threads of consanguinity are drawn out in this externally cold country.

I was amused at Mr. Crawfurd's surprise at the easy and familiar manners that prevail in our courts of justice, where every one seems so much at home, and the judges and the lawyers talk to each other with so little constraint. They have been at the High School and College together, played at golf in company of an afternoon, and discussed literature and politics together of an evening; in short, had common toils and common amusements from childhood. They seldom think of putting on solemnity; yet, when weighty matters are under discussion, they meet them with sufficient gravity. We have not, nor ever had, authors by profession: but when

our Advocates appear as authors, whether veiled or otherwise, they do not discredit their profession as lawyers, or their lighter avocations as occasional authors. I do not mean to boast of the "Loungers" and "Mirrors," in which, with much purity of style and sentiment, there is perhaps an over-proportion of gentlemanly dulness.

You have, without intending it, given me much pain in thinking of your friend Mrs. Hope's maternal sorrows. People who, in the midst of wealth and prosperity, retain tenderness of heart and strong family affection, have a dreadful tax to pay for so many blended enjoyments. When "the delight of their eyes is taken away with a stroke," the acute torture of the heart torn by such a separation, is neither to be told nor imagined. The poor, again, are inured to suffering, and pressed by hourly wants: they see no vista of pleasure or advantage opening to those they love, and have been much accustomed to look on the grave merely as a quiet harbour, where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest. But those whose sensibilities are refined by culture, while all the genuine affections of the heart live in undiminished warmth and simplicity, and who are surrounded with all that wealth can procure, or taste select for the purposes of enjoyment, must feel, more than others, a blow that not only excruciates the heart, but darkens the fair face of creation, and makes all around them seem vapid and tasteless. I trust Mrs. Hope begins to see some light through the cloud. I feel much more than common sympathy

with her, from the recollection of my own sinful excesses under a similar visitation.

I do not know how to be so sorry as I ought for your parting with Shabden, and all your sheltering shades and blushing roses in Surry. I think this will give us a greater chance of seeing you here; on which, I confess, my heart is so set, that it will be a serious disappointment if you do not come. I beg you will tell me very soon what you are to do next summer.

* * * * * *

That wonderful and brilliant antique, Henry Mackenzie, comes now and then to sit with me awhile, and gratifies me exceedingly by the vigour and variety of his evergreen conversation. Booksellers are apt to send him their manuscripts, and purchase upon his opinion. I hear that there is a novel on the eve of publication, entitled "Marriage:" it is an Edinburgh production, and that of a female pen; and it is not Mrs. Brunton's. . . . . Remember me in all kindness to your sisters. Pray write soon, or I shall think you are tired of your much obliged and truly attached

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCIV.

TO MRS. GORMAN, SEYMOUR STREET, BATH.

Edinburgh, 24th April, 1818.

My dear Mrs. Gorman,

The kind solicitude expressed in your last letter demanded, and should have had an immediate answer. I tell you, with much gratitude to the Giver of all good, that my daughter Moore is much better, indeed wants nothing of being well but to be less like a myrtle, that is to say, less susceptible of the chill blasts of our ungenial spring. I wish you knew Edinburgh, and the meadows and the links, that you might be awake to the charms of that sweet cottage which I have taken for my invalid and for Isabella, who watches over her sister like — if she were your daughter instead of mine I should say like a guardian angel. But why should I say this to you, who know her not — and well known she must be to have her modest excellence duly estimated. . . . . Now that you are satisfied on the head of convalescence, you have some curiosity to learn what *links* are. You must know, then, that most of our great towns are so fortunate as to have some piece of light sandy ground in the vicinity, which produces only furze and broom, and becomes valuable from its very defects, affording always a dry walk. The links of Edinburgh are also the gymnasium of the city — the place for boyish sports and manly exercises. — Here the *wappinschaws* were held of old; and here the good citizens pursue the flying ball, in the ancient mode of the golf. On the south

side of these links are the frugal villas of the last race of the Edinburgh citizens,—the old castle of Merchiston, where Lord Napier formed his logarithms,—the shaded modest dwelling where Robertson wrote his history,—another, very near it, where Adam Smith composed the works that perpetuate his name; and several other quiet abodes, without any ornament but groups of ancient trees that surround them, that yet seem haunted by the illustrious shades of their former inhabitants. Beyond these, several gentlemen's seats rise in prospect, and the Pentland hills form a fine screen to the westward. I should add, to finish the picture, that the Pisgah of Edinburgh, Blackford Hill, from whence Marmion surveyed the Scotch army, is near the scene I have described.

I do not know how I have been betrayed into this descriptive detail; but the pleasure I had in seeing my dear Moore settled in her garden-residence, all surrounded with bloom and fragrance, and sheltered from the surly east, has led me into it. I have always had such a liking to the links and their environs, that I fain would make you like them too.

Since my daughter has begun to recover I have resumed seeing my friends. A few days since I went to the Deaf and Dumb Asylum, with a Quaker lady from Durham, whose vigorous and well-cultured mind I greatly admire. My three fair Anglo-Saxons, Colonel Stewart of Garth, and a young American student, also accompanied me. We passed two hours there, astonished and delighted, I cannot tell you with what, only, generally, to see the lamp of intellect so clearly illuminating minds in which it had so long

slumbered in unconscious darkness. I asked a boy, by writing on his slate, "What is sympathy?" He instantly wrote under my question, "It is to be grievedly affected when another suffers." But I must not follow out all my discoveries and sensations among these happy creatures, luxuriating in the new world of ideas to which they have been so lately admitted.

Yesterday I fulfilled an engagement to dine at Dr. Brewster's *, who is one of our first characters as a Christian philosopher and a modest author, and is married to a daughter of our old neighbour at Laggan, Macpherson, the translator of Ossian: they are a young and very estimable pair. There I met, as might be expected, a select party of the worthy and the literary, of which, I think, Professor Jameson is the only one you have heard of.

Pray write when you receive this. I long to hear of your health and proceedings; and there is some merit in that in this whirlpool, which, however, I trust will never swallow up the affections of your fatigued but faithful friend,

ANNE GRANT.

* Now Sir David Brewster, Principal of the University of St. Andrew's.

LETTER CCV.

TO MRS. GORMAN, KILMORE, IRELAND.

Edinburgh, 12th June, 1818.

My dear Friend,

The letter which you did not write, but was your letter nevertheless, relieved me from some anxiety. I came at last to hope that one from you had been lost, as a lesser evil; for I was certain something must be the matter if it were not. Thank your friend for me, and accept my sincere sympathy for having your eyesight so long *prorogued*. Now as to Moore: she is well enough to walk about in the garden belonging to a pretty country lodging I have got for her and Isabella, where I sometimes go myself to let Isabella come in for a few days. She has not the least remains of her disorder, but a chilliness in the extremities, which this most gracious weather and exercise, I trust, is fast removing. We used to say before that she would be a very fit wife for Harry Gill.

My friends the Ruckers want to know from me what besides the Lakes of Killarney and Giant's Causeway might be proper objects for a traveller's curiosity in Ireland. Speak you, who best can tell, daughter of Erin, that I may answer questions distinctly. For my own part, there is portrayed in the wide panorama of my recollection the prettiest picture imaginable of Antrim, opposite to whose shores we were becalmed, and where the young woods were fresh and romantic; and of Larne, where I was domiciled for some days on my return

from America *, and in the precincts of which lively verdure and cordial kindness renovated my sea-sick imagination. I wonder if these places are really so desirable as I have thought them for fifty years back; or if I could recognise the rosy bloom and smiling graces of my companions in the little old women who survive.

I wish I had some way of sending you some Numbers of Blackwood's Magazine; but they are so local, that their abundant wit and humour would be lost without voluminous annotations. The fourth series of Tales of my Landlord has begun to peep out, and is said to surpass all the former. I never get strawberries or green peas, or poems or tales, till they are common: mere novelty and scarcity have no charms for me.

I wish I could transfuse into this letter, for your behoof, a share of the enjoyment which we all in this house tasted in a very comprehensive excursion we made two days since, where we saw so much natural beauty, and heard so much natural music, as was enough to humanise us for the whole season. We set out early, breakfasted at Roslin, and after spending two hours in such glens and dens as are nowhere else to be met with, we proceeded to the Castle of Dalhousie, the owners of which profit and power have drawn from all the sylvan beauties of their happy home to rule in Canada. In these unequalled gardens we spent the sultry hours, and shared our cold refreshments under trees in a rocky recess beside the Esk. We then pro-

* In 1769, when the Author returned with her parents from America to Scotland.

ceeded two miles further, and drank tea with a friend in the vicinity of the Marquis of Lothian's seat, at Newbattle, and wandered under the finest trees this country produces; then into the Buccleugh grounds almost adjoining, where, amidst every sylvan luxury imaginable, one must admire the moral taste of the noble and benevolent proprietors, who allow all birds and animals to live in safety and plenty around them. I must now bid you adieu. Commend me to your Catherine, and all others who care for your affectionate friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCVI.

TO MRS. SMITH.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 16th July, 1818.

We have been here anxious for your anxiety since civic honours have become somewhat perilous. If matters go on as they have done, my friend William*, in addition to his gold chain, will require to borrow the golden helmet of Mambrino, or procure some such substitute as that used by the inimitable Knight of La Mancha. Believe me that I should not speak with such levity of the existing disorders, if I thought the "whole head was sick, and the whole

* Mr. William Smith, son of Mr. Smith of Jordanhill, was then one of the Magistrates of Glasgow, which had been disturbed by disaffection among the lower classes.

heart faint." Far from distrusting that good Providence that has so peculiarly protected and blessed the land we live in, I think this discharge of peccant humours likely to prove salutary. People that hovered between two opinions, and in fact did not well know what they would be at, will take the alarm and be glad to quit the ranks of blasphemy and sedition; and all the good and wise, though inferior in number, are invariably on such occasions held together by a bond of union, that makes them superior in strength to the disunited bands of popular frenzy, headed by demagogues hateful and hating one another. How have I been betrayed into this *ettling* at public spirit?

You would know what I think of Peter's Letters? I answer in a very low whisper — not much. The broad personality is coarse, even where it is laudatory; no one very deserving of praise cares to be held up to the public eye like a picture on sale by an auctioneer: it is not the style of our country, and is a bad style in itself. So much for its tendency. Then, if you speak of it as a composition, it has no keeping, no chastity of taste, and is in a high degree florid and verbose. Edinburgh Castle, for instance, and the Calton Hill, are, in description, so very like the Palace of Alladin, or some gorgeous work of genii, that a young and warm imagination, taking all this for granted, must feel much disappointed on seeing the respectable reality. Some depth of thought and acuteness appears now and then like the weights at the tail of a paper kite, but not enough to balance the levity of the whole. With all this the genius which the writers possess, in no common degree, is obvious through the

whole book: but it is genius misapplied, and running riot beyond all the bounds of good taste and sober thinking. We are all amused, and so we should be if we lived in a street where those slaves of the lamp had the power of rendering the walls so transparent that we could see every thing going on at our neighbours' firesides. But ought we to be so pleased?

You ask me of Crabbe's Tales of the Hall. What shall I say of his merits, when I begin by confessing that his very faults delight me? All his quaintness, his elaborate minuteness, and his oddities of style, come to my sight like the moles and freckles in a dear friend's face, which I should be sorry to see removed. I seem to know his *dramatis personæ* intimately. How charming, yet how wounding, the sisters Lucy and Jane! What ease, and grace, and interest in Richard's detail of his childish feelings, and the incidents of after-life; and then the old bachelor, whose dog was so angry that he would not shoot, is inimitable. I have not read the second volume, and perused the first very hastily; but I look for much pleasure in reading it all leisurely. I could tell you a great deal about Crabbe's very self, if I had time, and you cared to hear. But I must now conclude; and, with affectionate regards to all, I am, as ever, your affectionate friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCVII.

TO MRS. GORMAN.

My dear Mrs. Gorman, Edinburgh, 27th July, 1818.

I should have earlier acknowledged your last letter, but I have led such a vagrant life this summer, and the summer itself has been so poetically bright and flowery, that one only thought of cool shades, Egerian grots, and all manner of places in which to be indolent and fanciful, and cool and tranquil.

I was with some of my family at the Peers' election in Holyrood Palace last Friday. There was something impressive in seeing the body of Scottish nobles assembled in that long resounding gallery, where the shadows of so many monarchs seem looking on to witness their proceedings. To hear them announced, and see them enter in succession, was something; and the Abjuration-oath, that hard pill at which so many good Jacobite stomachs revolted, was what really amused me,—such a barrier against the poor dead Pretender and half-alive Pope. The voting was very tedious, and this great room excessively hot and crowded. One that had much discernment in faces and dresses might be much amused; but for me, who have neither, there was only a general notion that I never saw so many plain, ill-dressed lords, or so many beautiful and well-dressed ladies.

Your gifted countrywoman Miss O'Neill has been delighting us all by her powers. I saw her play Mrs. Haller, which she did admirably. The house

was much crowded, and the Arch-Critic sat behind me in the box,—

> "Exulting, trembling, raging, fainting,
> Possess'd beyond the Muse's painting."

I never saw such an all-alive creature, or one whose feelings are so youthfully keen. Miss O'Neill lodges near us, and having known a little of Mary, she has called here with her brother and sister. She is admirable on the stage, and most respectable at all times: the intelligent composure and elegant simplicity of her manners please me exceedingly.

Yesterday I came in from the country, where I had been with some of my oldest and most beloved friends —a worthy clergyman and his excellent wife*,—well informed, all made of truth and kindness, and so primitive that one is carried back a century at least in their society. How I mourn over the few opportunities I have of being with those worthies, who love me truly, and seem to sit at the foot of Jacob's ladder and see angels ascending and descending. But I must *drie my weird*, and give much of my diminishing time to people that fill no place in my heart, and merely care for me because they think it is the fashion in some other quarters to do so.

I got this frank yesterday, and meant to rise very early in the morning and fill it; late at night, however, my son left a volume of the new Tales of my Landlord beside me, and gave me such an account of it, that I resolved to have an interview with Walter the Wonderful as soon as it was light. My attention was so chained that I read on in bed,

* The Reverend Dr. and Mrs. Hall of Edinburgh.

till I was summoned to breakfast; and now I am scribbling in all confusion and stupidity to overtake the post, being only able to say that I have brought Moore into town much better,—I may say, I trust, well,—and that I must defer the account of my travels, and of this bewitching Heart of Mid Lothian, to my next. I trust you are now restored to the best external blessing; at any rate Miss Catherine will still be good enough to write to your affectionate and sincere

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCVIII.

TO MRS. GORMAN.

My dear Mrs. Gorman, Edinburgh, 3d September, 1818.

I think if I were to give a name to this summer of surpassing beauty, I should call it the visionary or, less elegantly, the dreaming summer. Moore and Isabella had a pretty lodging, less than two miles from town; her very slow recovery kept me in a sort of restless anxiety, for which I found the best remedy in seeing her often, and musing and wandering among the blooming shades and warbling birds around her dwelling, where beauty and melody seemed exalted by the genial season. Then I had to make several little excursions to Stirling, Loch Catherine, &c., with my Anglo-Saxon inmates, Miss North and Miss Stanger, who, to do them justice, have not an atom of cockney about them;

and they have such a keen relish for every thing fine and wildly grand in Scottish scenery, and enter so fully into my admiration of ancient castles and old cathedrals, that I have a pleasure in matronizing them.

Last year, when I was with the Ruckers at Dunfermline, there was so much rain that I saw nothing that I wished to see there: I was therefore resolved to see it again. It lies in the kingdom of Fife; and in very old times it was a royal residence, having the castle of Ravenshaugh, in which Rosabelle was entreated to rest, in close vicinity, as also the fine old monastery of Culross. The drive from Edinburgh to Queensferry was delightful, the day fine, and the Firth, with its islands, sea-fowl, and seals swimming about, was quite picturesque,—not that the islands swam, though they looked a little like it. After crossing the ferry we proceeded a few miles further, when the bounds of Dunfermline opened upon us, all varied with swells of undulating surface planted and divided, rich in culture, and every way evidencing a seat of ancient and early civilization. We arrived about two, ordered dinner at the inn, took very little note of the town though pretty large and very populous, but went in the first place to visit the tomb of that most real and most royal hero, Robert Bruce. We bent with due reverence to this illustrious shade, and then proceeded to a shrine more pure and not less noble,—when I say more pure, I mean unstained by bloody trophies,—that of a true and royal saint, Margaret, Queen of Malcolm Canmore,—a perfect model of every female, saintly, and queenly virtue,

and the most eminent blue-stocking upon record. To *her* son it might be truly said,—

> "Thy mother,
> Oftener upon her knees than on her feet,
> Died every day she lived;"

and her learning was equal to her piety, and her wisdom and benevolence above all. I am sorry and ashamed to tell you that good King Malcolm Canmore, flying early before the face of the tyrant Macbeth, and living in constant anxiety till his return, somehow neglected his alphabet; yet he was a sovereign of great courage and ability, and could do every thing but read. His queen read much to him; and through her eyes he saw the light of wisdom, which charmed him so much that he used to kiss her books with great devotion. What an example! . . . . . You find by this time that there is in me a good deal of the spirit of an antiquary; had I been a Roman Catholic, I should have been a great pilgrim. There is still extant a very thick marble stone which covers the remains of this good queen; it was covered over before the rage of reformation destroyed the abbey.

> "Long upon her tomb has beat
> The winter's storm, the summer's heat,
> The driving snow, the drenching rain,
> Alas! they have not beat in vain;"

for the epitaph is effaced, but the places sunk for lights at the four corners are still visible. The church remains, but is so old, so very old, yet still used as a place of worship.

People must dine though towers should topple on their warden's head; and after we had refreshed ourselves

in this very common way, we went to shelter in the shades of Pittencrieff, interesting to all from its sylvan graces. This was the royal domain, and the ruins of the palace of "Dunfermline Gray" are sheltered under its venerable shades. Many fine lofty arches still remain, and the low vaults (once offices and wine-cellars), still entire, show the strength and dignity of the building. I was not a little proud, when I saw the date 1105, that so stately a fabric should have existed so early in this country. After leaving Dunfermline we passed through the very ancient borough of Inverkeithing, whose respectable ugliness impressed me like the wrinkles of a grandmother, producing veneration without disgust; and we then arrived at the less considerable and less ugly town of Aberdour, graced with environs on which the eye loves to pause and the memory to rest. Here, when we had walked an hour and drank tea, two youths appeared on the beach with a boat, whom we found to be my son and a friend of his, come over for us. Twilight grey forbade us to linger, and we embarked on a sea whose gentle undulation looked like animated peace; and my fellow-travellers, seeing the moon rise broad and bright over the water, were transported as if they had never seen a full moon before; and such a gay voyage was never seen; it was five miles to Newhaven, and they wished it ten. I felt the influence of reflected enjoyment: must I own that that is all of this nature that remains to me? But I thank the Author of all goodness that even this remains, and that I am surrounded with those who daily call forth those sympathies.

You will probably see my friends the Ruckers in the course of their Irish tour. You will be pleased with Mrs. Rucker at once; she is sincere, affectionate, pious, natural, and warm-hearted. He is the soul of philanthropy, uncultivated, but with the finest feelings, the tenderest heart, and child-like innocence. Adieu, dear Mrs. Gorman; and with kind regards to Catherine, I am, faithfully and sincerely yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCIX.

TO MRS. GORMAN.

Edinburgh, 11th November, 1818.

My dear Mrs. Gorman,

I will not fill this letter, as Misses never fail to do, with apologies, — I mean in such cases as this, where the long delay of acknowledging welcome gifts, and thrice-welcome letters, seems to argue culpable negligence. Believe that I set the highest value on your kindness in all the various modes of its expression, though I could not till this day find leisure to acknowledge it.

I find that I am not able to catch the post with a letter of decent extent, and I am impatient to let you know that I am not only alive, but grateful and consistent; but I fear I must divide my intended letter into two, that I may find room in the next for my acknowledgments to your lord for the coins — medals, I had almost said — which I have placed in the corner of a drawer that contains, among

other matters rare and curious, a wreath of ivy, gathered on Virgil's tomb, and a chaplet prettily formed and bound up of the Attic olive, from a tree growing by the ruin or site of the Delphian temple. These have been lately brought home to me by an enthusiastic friend*, and have their own value in their own way, but, compared to my coins, are but as fable compared to history.

There is nothing thought of in this intellectual city but the tragical conclusion of Sir Samuel Romilly's useful and active life. The example will be fatal: there is a combustible hoard of discontent in many minds that wants merely a touch of the horrible to explode. I believe that men who did not love the partners of their heart less than Sir Samuel have survived them, in the fond hope of supplying their place to their children; but I am apt to think that when people go through more intellectual drudgery than suits this compound frame — the earthly part of which claims its right while shrouding the immortal guest — the organs which are most worn or affected by this incessant labour, may be so much injured as not to be able to resist any sudden or extraordinary pressure. Again, I am sure for my own part, if I were a whig leader, however pure my virtue or upright my intentions, if I were year after year crying woe to Jerusalem, I should end, like the poor maniac in Josephus, with crying woe to myself. I could not constantly explore and display existing and imaginary or future calamities, without being

* The late H. W. Williams, Esq., of Edinburgh, author of Travels in Italy and Greece.

infected to the very core with that discontent which it was the business of my life to produce and cherish in others. If I lived to sow the wind, I think I should die reaping the whirlwind. All this argues nothing against the moral or religious feeling of upright whigs, of whom I know many; but it argues for the necessity of sometimes, at least, looking through the right end of the perspective. It is good for people like myself that there should be others, less willing to be satisfied, to stand sentinels on the public weal, and watch over abuses. I think, however, that the individuals themselves are often, either in soul, body, or estate, the victims of the croaking habit thus produced.

My friend Mrs. Rucker is quite enamoured of your bonny Kate, whose pleasing appearance and gentle, courteous manners have made no small impression on the whole party. With kind regards to her, I am dear Mrs. Gorman, sincerely yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCX.

TO MRS. SMITH.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 18th November, 1818.

Your letter came just in time to remove a fit of jealousy. I had no objection to be postponed for the measles, but much further I did not wish to be delayed: I never forget, and like not to be forgotten.

We are all well, and Moore nearly so; she has merely a tendency to rheumatic fever, which we humbly hope to conquer by keeping her in the house for the winter. She hears often from Miss Glassell, whose letters from abroad are very amusing, but in substance, I think, much like those you receive, though the same objects may be more forcibly portrayed in her energetic though careless language. It is in that negligence of order and precision that much of the merit of her epistolary style consists: not that careless rapidity in itself constitutes merit, but that it prevents certain demerits that distort or flatten the style of those who would be thought fine writers. Her fluency is not merely that of words; it is that of a fervid mind, kindled by powerful emotion, that speaks more to relieve itself than to inform, far less dazzle others: in short, it is unstudied and original, amply compensating for the want of that elegance which is now become too cheap for admiration.

I condole with you on the loss of your worthy pastor, Dr. Balfour*, who will scarcely meet with an adequate successor,—I mean his people will not. I admired his natural eloquence, and most completely acquiesced in the soundness of his doctrine. Your scruples in detaching yourself, in the duties of public worship, from your family, must have been to your feeling mind of much weight, and, I am sure, unmixed with any lower motive. But I think you are well aware that I do not extend this indulgence of opinion to all females who choose a separate path, my observation of life having warranted me in the

* One of the ministers of the High Church, Glasgow.

opinion that a love of distinction and consequence, among a certain set, has more to do with it than the subjects of this censure of mine are at all aware of. Nothing can be further from applying to you, who are diffident to a fault: but you may observe that most people who separate from their family in this manner are of the tribe distinguished for self-opinion; and that when once they do set up a standard of purer doctrine and stricter practice, their charity and good-will become very much limited to those who hear the same preacher, and very much alienated from the friends of early life. I speak in some bitterness of spirit, at present, from strong anxiety on account of an excellent but rash and impetuous person, who, I am much afraid, is about to take a step of this kind, which I know will occasion, not vexation merely, but much grief in her own family. When people of sense and steadiness take such a step, from the very best motives, it is too apt to afford a sanction to those who are not aware of the fickleness and feebleness of their own minds, but think, as the unhappy student said the other day of Sir Samuel Romilly, that what such a one did cannot be wrong. I have not leisure to explain myself, and fear that for want of that leisure I may have offended or given you pain, for which I should be very sorry.

The hasty scrawling of this letter has forced me to postpone some clamant duties which I owe to friends that I am neglecting, and to unanswered letters that reproach me in eloquent silence. Death, always present to my secret thoughts though little improving their tenor, is ever knocking at my door in the notices

of younger children of sin and sorrow suddenly summoned away; and yet I am idly busy and vainly concerned about things that are the mere playthings of reason, and perhaps worse, taken in a more serious view. Must it ever be thus, or shall I put off this interest in the things of time before I am called to put off mortality? It is an awful question. I have been discussing it with Mrs. Henry Erskine, and find her views of the subject what I should wish to be my own. Adieu, my dear friend, ever your affectionate

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXI.

TO MRS. GRANT, LATE OF DUTHIL.

Edinburgh, 12th January, 1819.

My dear Madam,

I can no longer delay offering to you my sincere condolence on the misfortune in which you and yours have too amply shared from the burning of your house at Auchterblair;—I call it yours from the deep and near concern you have in all its inhabitants. I long to hear how you have borne this calamity,—I mean, how your health may have been affected by it; for I should not suppose, if that were unimpaired by the shock, that your mind would sink under any incident the effects of which may be repaired. Those irreparable losses, the sense of which cannot depart while the spirit is shrouded in the veil of mortality, subdue the mind to a comparative indifference to mere worldly

losses, only as far as our sympathy for others is concerned. The notice in the newspapers, the only channel from which we derived information, was very general, only adding the consolatory circumstances that no lives were lost, and that the house was insured. I cannot say how much I was struck by the account of this event. Had it happened in any part of the low country, whatever might be my concern for the inhabitants, I should have been less shocked by the intelligence. How to account for the difference I know not; but it somehow happens that a fire so fatal as the one from which your family have suffered, is of rare occurrence in the Highlands; and considering the materials of the buildings, and the unconquerable fearlessness of the servants about fire and light, one should expect fires to be there more frequent than in any other place.

I have nothing to tell you from this place that I can expect to interest you under the present circumstances. That correspondence of mind which arises from a common acquaintance scarcely exists between us at this distance; and I live in too much ignorance of what you read, or whom you care for, to choose the topics most likely to amuse you, though I should be very willing to divert your attention a little from the immediate view of the perplexing inconvenience and total interruption of ordinary pursuits, which must for some time succeed such a painful occurrence as you have met with.

Our thoughts, and indeed those of the Edinburgh public in general, have been much engrossed of late by one of those irreparable privations to which I have

alluded. The death of Mrs. Brunton, the authoress of Self-Control, and Discipline, under circumstances most aggravating to those nearly concerned, and painful to the feelings of her numerous friends and admirers, has produced a deep and universal sensation. Her character has been so ably and truly delineated in the public prints that nothing can be added to her praise by me, who knew and loved her much, and would have lived in the most cordial intimacy with her had circumstances admitted; but her spending the summer in the country seven miles off, and in winter our inhabiting the extreme opposite parts in the town, prevented our meeting as often as we wished. We did meet, however, as often as we could at home, and frequently in third places. One consolation I have, which does not seem to be taken into account by others; it is looking back on the peculiar and very superior degree of happiness which she enjoyed here, resulting from a clear conscience, and a life spent in the active and unwearied exercise of beneficence, — a cordial and vital piety that was too much a part of herself to be worn outwardly in the way of display; a vigorous and powerful mind, above disguise or littleness of any kind; a constant, unvaried cheerfulness, not the result of mere animal spirits, but of true wisdom and content; an excellent husband, loving and beloved, and sufficiency for her modest wishes. I might add, that she combined with the treasures of a cultivated intellect the capacity for most judicious and regular family management. She was not merely happy in what she possessed, but in what she had not: she had not the least shadow of

pride that makes so many odious, nor of vanity which makes so many ridiculous and worse than ridiculous; consequently, she had not a shade of pretence or affectation. I really never knew a person more perfectly natural in manner or language: judge how much she must have been beloved.

One privation she felt at first keenly, but very early brought her mind to submit to it with cheerful resignation: it was the want of offspring. After being nineteen years married, this only wish seemed to be granted. Every one rejoiced, and many thought this was granted to her as a temporal reward for her generous and tender care for the forlorn and helpless children of others in various instances. Why should I tell of our hopes and joys on this occasion? After three days of great suffering she gave birth to a still-born child. She insisted on seeing it, held its hand, and said, "The feeling this hand has caused to my heart will never leave it." Shortly after, a relative came and spoke tenderly of her loss: in her plain strong way she said, "There was nothing so dear to me as my child; and I make my Saviour welcome to it." After this she never mentioned it, and seemed to go on well for a few days, when she was attacked with fever, which soon terminated fatally. I leave you to imagine, what I cannot describe, the sorrow of her husband!

I must conclude, with my sincere sympathy and kindest wishes to your family, in which all mine join. I am, with much regard, dear madam, your old and sincere friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXII.

TO MRS. HOOK.

Edinburgh, 23d January, 1819.

I will not, my dear friend, let the week pass without its letter, though it has been so hurried that I look back on it as on a dream. On Monday I had a party. Circumstanees make the recurrence of these a necessary evil, where there are such young people as mine, — orphans, to whom I stand in the place of a mother: they expect to be a little introduced to society, and ought to be so; and I do not choose to receive this kind of civility without making some return. My party was small, the principal figures therein being Mrs. Fletcher, her family, and the Sultan Katti-Gherri, from Mount Caucasus, a convert from the Mahometan faith to Christianity, and moreover a liberal, sound-thinking person, who will be the Czar Peter of his wild dominion in a far better sense than his savage-hearted prototype, who, for want of knowing better—charity bids us believe—endeavoured to separate what God had originally joined together —the progress of knowledge from that of moral improvement. But you shall hear more hereafter of the Sultan Katti-Gherri, who deserves at least a page of eulogium.

As to Blackwood's Magazine, it is somewhat odd that all the wits (for wits they certainly are) engaged in that work should be from the West of Scotland. Laurenwinkle, and all the contributions of the same masterly hand, are attributed to John Lockhart, the

son of one of the ministers of Glasgow: he is a handsome, gentlemanlike young man, in company reserved and silent, yet evidently a diligent observer. Mr. Thomas Hamilton, younger brother to Sir William, is the author of the Memoirs of Ensign O'Doherty. The other West-country people are John Wilson, the "Isle of Palms," as he is called here; a man of genius and talents, much goodness of heart, and considerable eccentricity; he lived some time at the English Lakes, where he still has property, and is a disciple and great admirer of Wordsworth. His younger brother, James, is, I think, at least equal to him both in talent and judgment, and possesses a sort of peculiar quiet humour, which is irresistible. Mr. Robert Sym, the maternal uncle of John Wilson, writes the Letters from Timothy Tickler to Hogg and others, which you would think very good did you know the parties.

I would say much of Wordsworth if I had time: he certainly has a head of gold, but his feet are of clay, with little or no mixture of iron. There was a man here some time ago that drew an audience — spectators I mean — and much money by writing with his feet: whether Wordsworth had the same motive or not, I cannot say; but I think he must have written his poem of the White Doe with these *clay* feet of his. There is something so pure and lofty in his conceptions, — he views external nature so entirely with a poet's eye, and has so little of the taint of worldly minds, that I grieve when I find him wandering through the trackless wilds of metaphysics, where I cannot follow him, or in the

lower and too obvious paths of childish inanity, where I wish not to accompany him. Yet he is always morally right; and his pictures in the Excursion delight me. It is next to profanation to read that book in town, unless at midnight: its purity and simplicity, and occasional elevation of thought, make us all, with our note-writing and everlasting door-bells calling us to talk nothings to mere nobodies, seem like puppets on wires, without a thought beyond our daily trifles, which are worse than his worst, — the radiance of the White Doe excepted. What a treasure the Excursion would have been at Laggan! How often, even amidst this senseless hurry, have I read the account of the eccentric clergyman, who removed his family in panniers to the mountain parsonage. People come in here constantly with new books, that take up one's time; — dear Laggan, where we conned over those we had till they grew like old friends! Adieu, dear friend: you will hear soon again from your ever affectionate

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXIII.

TO MRS. GORMAN.

Edinburgh, 25th January, 1819.

My dear Mrs. Gorman,

There is a stumbling-block in my way which I find often a great hinderance when I would write to any of my particular friends, — I mean my desire of

writing a long letter. I had a number to answer, some of them from valuable correspondents, and others from poor souls who hoped that I might be myself, or make others, useful to them. If you did but know how many orphan girls I have to seek employment and situations for! All these matters multiplied upon my hands for many weeks past; — and the necessary dining, the indispensable evening parties, the strangers that bring letters from friends, — all this turmoil is most adverse either to penning forth the flowing heart, or opening the door of that cage in which worldly prudence shuts up the imagination; though I like to do with that, what my daughter Moore does with her birds, let it out now and then to flutter unconfined.

If I were as good a gossip as Horace Walpole I could tell you of such belles, such marriages, and such parties; but I do not possess his power of giving interest to the mere phantoms of fashion, that would have passed away like summer flies, had they not been preserved in his brilliant pages like the same flies in amber. You may judge how little I am mistress of my time and actions when I tell you that the only friend of my early days, who is within my reach, and who lives a few doors off, I have not been able all this winter to give half an hour to, once in the fortnight. You would wonder more if you knew who she is: no other than the Hon. Mrs. Henry Erskine, the widow of that much admired, witty, and amiable man, who found in her uncommon talents, exalted, almost romantic virtues, and ever vigilant affection, — a cure for the many disappointments

which various trials and a defeated party had inflicted on his declining years.

Mary and I went last night to a party at Miss Hamilton's; and the rooms were soon filled with all that is most gay and fashionable in Edinburgh. Soon after arriving there, I was told of the death of my much loved pupil, Lady Elizabeth Boyle. I had no hope of her recovery, but thought she might have lingered longer. From what I knew of her bodily and mental sufferings, I would not have said, — though I might with effect, —

> "Absent thee from felicity awhile,
> And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain."

But the time and place gave something like horror to the announcement. To see so many thoughtless creatures dancing, as all of us do, on the edge of danger, while she whose beauty had such a distinguished character of powerful and dignified mind, whose feelings were all honourable and virtuous, and whose heart was warm and true beyond most others, was thus nipt in her bloom. I hurried Mary away directly lest she should hear these tidings in a ball-room. Judge what a house of mourning this is to-day.

I cannot think of entering upon any new theme after this sad one. I hope soon to have the pleasure of hearing from you. Meantime, believe me, sincerely and faithfully, yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXIV.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Edinburgh, 2d March, 1819.

My dear Friend,

I had a mere glimpse of your son William, whose civic wreath I should think stands rather in the way of his social pleasures, when it limits him so much in time. But he is, I am told, becoming a very influential personage, and will be rewarded both in general popularity and self-approbation.

You should congratulate me on a severe cold, which has procured me a week's desirable quiet. Yesterday I was obliged, in a manner, to dine out; that is, I thought myself obliged to dine with Mr. Pillans, I who, you know, presides most respectably over the High School here, never having had it in my power to accept an invitation there before. This was the less convenient, as I had asked a few friends to come here in the evening. I met a very desirable society at dinner,—Sir Harry Moncreiff, Miss Moncreiff, his daughter, Mr. Andrew Thomson, of St. George's Church, Mr. Thomson, minister of Duddingstone, our own Mackays, and the parents and brother of the late amiable and much lamented Francis Horner, besides two or three nameless youths, and a most admirable American, Mr. Preston*, who, if he lives, will, I think, be heard of as an ornament of that great continent. His society has afforded us all great

* W. C. Preston, Esq., now one of the senators for South Carolina, and a distinguished speaker in the congress of the United States of America (1843).

pleasure this winter: such light of mind — such perfect good nature — such a flow of native eloquence, without a shadow of false decoration or false taste! I admire him as much for what he is not, as for what he is.

I was obliged to leave this most desirable party by nine, and found my people at home assembled. I could scarcely, after the waste of the day, furnish spirits to entertain my guests; but "Music held the whole in perfect peace," as Thomson says of his golden age. O how often I say to myself in the evening; "Thus passes the day, deceitful, vain, and void." How soon they will all be past, and how terrible is the account to be made up, when the thunder from without answers to the whispers from within!

Poor Lady E. Boyle! How much have I heard, and how much have I to tell you, of her closing scene. Her sister, Lady Isabella, that epitome of gentle worth and humble piety, sat some hours with us, and told us the minutest particulars with such vivid reality. Adieu, dear friend. I am, yours unchangeably,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXV.

TO MRS. BROWN, ST. VINCENT STREET, GLASGOW.

Edinburgh, 7th May, 1819.

My dear Mrs. Brown,

We have been told, by the highest authority, that in the latter days men shall run to and fro through the earth, and knowledge shall be increased. I think, as far as this prediction leads us, the latter days must be drawing near; for no creature seems to be stationary, with the exception of yourself and a very few others. People go to London as we would have gone to Rutherglen, and cross the strait between Calais and Dover as we should have done Queensferry in our memorable journey to Perth, to which I look back with interest, still, through the vista of a busy and eventful life. Strange occurrences, and, above all, strange marriages, are produced by this universal migration. I am going to tell you of a most romantic marriage going to take place, where the parties are the most unromantic imaginable; for I do not consider the hero of my tale as romantic, because his hope is of a better world, and his ambition to win souls to Christ. One might almost as well call St. Paul romantic; and I dare say the Jews did so, if their language afforded an equivalent phrase. My hero, then, is the Sultan Katti-Gherri, a native of Caucasus, and a convert from the Mahometan to the Christian faith; a most admirable person in all respects, our visiter, and, I hope I may add, friend. He carries with him a young lady from Edinburgh, to share the sceptre of the Crimea. I wish I could

tell you particulars about this most enviable fair one: that she is pious I take for granted, otherwise she would not be his choice. It is prudent in him to connect himself with this country, and carry a companion with him who will enter into his views and pursuits with cordial sympathy. Our Sultan goes in June, and takes with him two missionaries and their families.

I thank you for the volume of Dr. Chalmers's Sermons. Try if you can discover in which of them I trace a painful and too resembling portrait of myself. That soothing syren song of applause, merely due to qualities that please without profiting our fellow-creatures, is certainly a dangerous, and often fatal, soporific to the conscience. But I will avoid another danger — that of telling my fellow-creature, who cannot help me, of remorse which can only be safely or properly laid open to the Power whose blessing can alone give it wholesome efficacy. My admiration — will it be thought presumption to add approbation — is not diminished by quietly *reading* those discourses, which I felt so impressive while aided by the energy with which they were delivered. The volume is now in the hands of a humble Christian, under deep affliction, who will, I doubt not, find comfort where others find a stumbling-block. It is Miss P——, who sent for them: she is the sister of that most excellent and amiable person, Mrs. J. F., of whose death, of an hour's illness, I wrote to your sister. Mrs. F., with all the *disadvantages*, I may call them, of youth, beauty, talent, high worldly prosperity, and an education in India, where

her father held a high station,—in spite, I say, of all these encumbering hinderances, she early chose the better part; the stamp of Christianity appeared upon her conduct and manners in singular meekness and gentleness; and she had the happiness of bringing her husband over entirely to her own way of thinking. Though much overwhelmed at first, he now bears the greatest of possible privations, with the subdued resignation of one acknowledging the Power and Goodness that has early called away, to endless felicity, what was dearest to him on earth.

We have been like to lose Walter Scott,—a loss I cannot think of without fear and pain. A life so spotless, a heart so kind, a temper so unclouded, and a mind before which fame and fortune have vainly spread their enchantments, would, if removed from among us, make a blank in the objects of our national pride and pleasure not to be supplied. I have just room for my kindest remembrances to Robert, and am always, your gratefully attached friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXVI.

TO MR. JOHN HENNING, ARTIST, LONDON.

Dear Henning, Edinburgh, 8th May, 1819.

You will receive this from your brother, and would have heard from me sooner, but that I have been ill with an influenza, from which I am but just recovering. I leave my son to express his gratitude

for your elegant present, the models from the Elgin marbles: I have only to express my satisfaction at finding that your ingenious industry is likely to open to you the path to independence.

I hope your son will never give you cause to repent preferring his safety and spiritual welfare to the advantageous prospect that was opened to him in sharing the travels of a nobleman, and having all the glories of ancient art laid open to him. Though no worse consequence had followed, he might have acquired tastes and habits adverse to that frugal simplicity which to a self-dependant person, struggling through life, is the basis of virtue and content.

I am much pleased with the modest sedateness of your brother's countenance and manners. I think he will prove one of those calm, industrious Scotchmen who quietly and prudently make their way better, perhaps, in the long run, than those who set out with much greater advantages, counteracted by habits of indulgence. I think he will not be so sanguine or so sensitive as yourself. "Slow rises worth by poverty depressed," says the sage of Litchfield; yet in the long run it generally does rise; and prosperity is not the less relished for having been conquered by stubborn perseverance.

You see what compliments Jeffrey pays you in the last Edinburgh Review but one: I really think he only reviewed that silly publication to give him an opportunity of talking of you while on the subject of the arts.* I should be glad to know how you mean

* Mr. Henning, a native of this country, who unites to the justest taste and the greatest powers of execution a degree of general know-

to dispose of your other boys: John's fate, I know, inherent genius has decided; Joseph used to interest me much; and of his progress I should be glad to hear. I can only add, that I am, with sincere regard, your steady, though unflattering friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXVII.

TO MRS. GORMAN, KILMORE, IRELAND.

Edinburgh, 24th May, 1819.

My dear Mrs. Gorman,

I received your letter with the warmest sensibility to all its kindness. You will wonder at the shape my gratitude has taken: my silence was meant to spare you the pain of knowing that I suffered much pain, succeeded by great fear and anxiety, since I had that kind letter. My dear Moore was just getting better of that feverish and rheumatic disorder which had so long made her a prisoner, and was preparing to go out for the first time since autumn, and busied

ledge almost unexampled in his profession, has finished the most perfect models of a great part of the frieze [of the Temple of Minerva], and is going on with his work. Whoever is desirous of possessing a perfect miniature of this great piece of sculpture, may thus be furnished with it by means of Mr. Henning's casts. The retirement natural to modest genius, and the obscurity too often the lot of unprotected strangers, have hitherto kept this most deserving artist from reaping the rewards which he might have expected under more favourable circumstances; but we shall be greatly surprised if the discriminating taste and liberality of the metropolis does not make him amends for the neglect he has hitherto experienced, as soon as his admirable models of the Elgin marbles are known." — *Edinburgh Review*, Sept. 1818.

in making up a dress for that purpose, when upon returning from church I found her extremely ill with this same influenza. To tell you of her consequent weakness, and my consequent misery, would be merely a renewal of unavailing sorrows. Suffice it that, with deep gratitude to Him who afflicts not willingly the children of the dust, I can now say that she is recovering fast, I trust; and am told by her medical attendant that this attack may probably carry off the remains of her former lingering illness.

I will now send a secret over the channel, which I keep from every one here, for reasons that you will presently well understand. Here is an elegant minded, well born, well educated, and well principled Episcopal clergyman, whom you would love with all your heart, if you knew him, and will pity with all your soul, though you know him not, when I tell you that, with much refinement and the habits of superior society, he has eight children to support, with a very excellent wife, on a very limited income. Her very feeble body contains a mind most energetic, most original; her firmness, and contempt for petty luxuries, and the tight rein which she keeps on a temper naturally liberal and compassionate in a high degree, raise her in my eyes to the rank of a heroine, whose noble self-government and singular exertion is not the less respectable for being confined to the sphere of domestic usefulness. She who lays down the book which would be to her elastic and discerning mind a source of pure pleasure, to take up the long darning-needle and mend or make incessantly, deserves to wear the greenest wreath — if such a wreath there be — allotted to

generous self-denial. Well, but to the point: they have an excellent house, and while they found it compatible to receive company, they were visited by the first society in town, both in regard to rank and mind: they had then three or four youths from England, the sons of noblemen, or persons of great fortune, who attended college, and shared the advantages of their host's superintendence, and of the best society imaginable, in those attic evenings which I had often much pleasure in sharing. *Now* the size of their fast-growing family precludes this source of emolument, while it is thus become more necessary than ever. Perhaps you know, but more likely you don't, that two monthly magazines appear in Edinburgh, as the squires and precursors of those two formidable knights who four times a year break a lance with each other, in the shape of the Edinburgh and London Quarterly Reviews. Constable, having quarrelled with the editor of his magazine, has engaged our friend of the chapel as editor. Now it so happens, that of those rival magazines, that of Blackwood (the squire of the Quarterly Review) not only abounds in attic salt, but in that pungent pepper by mortals styled personality. It is supported by a club of young wits, many of whom are well known to me; who, I hope, in some measure fear God, but certainly do not regard man. Four thousand of this cruelly witty magazine are sold in a month, at which I do in wonderment abound, as a great many are sold in London, and possibly in Dublin, where I should suppose our localities would be little understood,—and certainly nothing can be more local. Now this friend above said begged ear-

nestly for a little assistance from me to enliven the rival magazine, of which he has as yet only edited two numbers. I cannot, or will not, contribute much after he is fully afloat; and the Blackwoodians would caricature me if they knew that I forsook (as they would suppose) the standard of true toryism. That I never will; but this little aid, not by any means political, bestowed, without fee or reward, on a truly good man struggling with difficulties such as I have painfully experienced, I shall class with the few good deeds that my narrow limits permit me to indulge in. I am this moment going to put on my veil and write a criticism, as my contribution to the next month.

I wish you knew all about the people of the good town, that the gossip of it might amuse you. Did I ever tell you of that compound of wit and folly the Earl of B——? His childless wife, for whose death he has been languishing for years back, expired near a fortnight ago; he buried her with honest undissembled glee, and in two days made his proposals—at seventy-four, observe—to a very fair young lady, his neighbour in the country, which she absolutely, nay scornfully, rejected. . . . . .

The General Assembly of our church is now sitting: I shall tell you of that, and many other interesting matters, in my next. Meantime have the goodness to acknowledge this; and to believe that I am, very much yours,

ANNE GRANT.

Letter CCXVIII.

TO A FRIEND IN AMERICA.

Edinburgh, 24th June, 1819.

My dear Miss ——,

I received your letter, and am much flattered by retaining so lively a place in your remembrance. I should have all your sympathy if you knew how my spirits have been depressed of late by domestic affliction. My dear Moore, my youngest daughter, so particularly my friend and companion, has for two successive winters been confined by slow remitting fevers, with a rheumatic tendency that remains after they are past. She begins now to recover; but you may believe her continued illness has engrossed my time and thoughts not a little. Mary is housekeeper, and Isabella, as well as she, must necessarily give much time to four young ladies, very pleasant inmates, who live in the house; and I daily read to Moore during her illness, for she was never too ill to converse or to hear reading. Her pious and powerful mind has been wonderfully supported during this illness; she has never been dispirited—never incapable of being amused and interested.

The American character has been much raised among our literary people here, by a constellation of persons of brilliant talents and polished manners, by whom we were dazzled and delighted last winter. A Mr. Preston from Virginia, and his friend from Carolina, whose name I cannot spell, for it is French, Mr. Ticknor, and Mr. Cogswell, were the most distinguished representatives of your new world. A

handsome and high-bred Mr. Ralston from Philadelphia, whose mind seemed equal to his other attractions, left also a very favourable impression of transatlantic accomplishments. These were all very agreeable persons — Mr. Ticknor pre-eminently so; and I can assure you ample justice was done to their merits here.

They had to me, however, one fault, the more marked for being the only one, apparently, detracting from much acknowledged merit. You will not guess it, and others perhaps would not think it at all blameable. I mean a preference for France, — for the European continent altogether, which provokes me, as, in the first place, unnatural, considering whence they derive their ancestry, their language, their religion, and their laws, — not to add that innate inherited love of liberty, that has made them, and still keeps them, a free people. I knew a gentleman who asserted that good people were never agreeable, at least by no means so agreeable as persons of doubtful morals, who merely hold their place in society by cultivating all the arts of pleasing and being most amusing, most obliging, and most attentive to those they meet in company. The person who made this strange assertion defended it very plausibly, by saying, that persons wrapt up in conscious integrity were so well satisfied of deserving the good opinion and confidence of others, that they made no constant effort to obtain it; and that their thoughts were too much occupied with the duties they have to perform while here, and the awful responsibility that awaits them, to be at liberty to sport, like an insect on the breeze, in the

atmosphere of gaiety and good humour. On the other hand, those who regard no futurity, who have no weight of important duties pressing on them, and no strong claim to deeply-founded esteem,—whose all is in this world, and who find that little all depend on their raising a little tax of good will, by watching the inclinations and humouring the fancies of those they meet with; that people of this last description, possessing agreeable talents and polished manners, have certainly a greater chance to please strangers, who merely meet them in society: and that these *agrêmens* may be successfully cultivated, where the moral character is by no means pure, and totally without the support of religion, we all know. It is thus, and thus only, that I can account for the preference your countrymen show to the French, who certainly, as a people, fall as far below us in moral worth as they exceed us in showy accomplishments and the art of pleasing. Perhaps I carry this too far; for, though these dintinguished countrymen of yours were not partial to Britain in general, they seemed to like Edinburgh very much better than any other part of this country; and with that I ought to be satisfied. My great wish for Americans finishing their education here is merely from an idea that they would carry from hence a higher tone of moral feeling; and what I have heard themselves say of the German universities confirms me in that opinion.

I have insensibly rambled into a long discussion, which I did not in the least intend; but I cannot help feeling a kindly tie binding me to those whom I have been so long accustomed to consider as my nurse's, if

not my mother's children. With affectionate wishes towards all of your family who know of me or care about me, I am, my dear madam, with cordial esteem, yours, very truly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXIX.

TO MRS. HOOK.

Ormiston, East Lothian,
16th July, 1819.

My dear Friend,

I have lived in such a dream since I wrote last, that all I can exactly remember of the state of our correspondence is, that I did write to you since the long-hovering stroke descended on you,—you know I mean in regard to your much-honoured parent.* I think I wrote to dear Eliza, who, of all others, most needs consolation; though it is comfortable to think she knows well what are the true sources from which it can only be effectually sought.

* * * * * *

I have not time to tell you of all my engagements in summer, and of the last spring; besides the daily duties that press upon me,—such amiable and such pleasant Irish, and (would you think it?) such accomplished Americans. Mr. Ticknor, one of the most amiable and polished of these last, formed many friendships abroad, and was, in particular, intimate

* Sir Walter Farquhar, Bart., father of Mrs. Hook. He died 26th March, 1819.

with that wonderful person Madame de Stael, as also with the Duke and Duchess de Broglie, which latter — Madame de Stael's daughter — corresponds frequently with him. He says that the Duke and Duchess are models of every domestic as well as every exalted virtue; that the Duchess excels where her mother was defective, and possesses in a great degree the same talents, but with much diffidence and still more indolence; yet they were fondly attached to each other. Madame de Stael used to say, "My daughter is me *passive*." Mr. T. says he never knew a person possessed of such perfect benevolence as Madame de Stael, or so ready in every thing to consult the gratification of others in preference to her own, and that not merely of those she loved and admired: it was like dew, that descends on weeds as well as flowers. What a strange union of extremes in her character! and how highly have her talents, and the latter application of them, exalted her in the public opinion! Have you read her last work?* I have begun, but not finished it. At first I did not take much to it: her extravagant eulogiums on her father, in which she more than insinuates that all would have gone well had he been ruler of all, appeared silly. Had he been Solomon, and Alfred, and Lord Wellington in one, what could a single individual's wisdom or courage have done against a nation of lunatics, abandoned by divine wrath, as a punishment for national sin, to a fit of horrid frenzy? Enough of this.

* "On the French Revolution." A posthumous work in three volumes, published in 1818.

I am now writing in the most delightful cottage imaginable, where I am enjoying myself exceedingly, after the fever of agitation and exertion that has been my lot in Edinburgh all this spring. I enjoy also the leisure which permits me to write to you and other absent friends, to walk in the fields, and saunter in a beautiful garden, and to live a few days with people that love me very well, and whom I both love and esteem. All this I feel like a gale from Eden, refreshing my spirits, and renewing my strength. I should tell you that I am at Ormiston; and that Ormiston is a village in East Lothian, ten miles from Edinburgh, with the Tyne flowing behind it, and in sight of Lammermoor; and that, alas! it is almost the only village I know in Scotland which is quite on the English model—neat and clean, with trees, orchards, and hedge-rows: it is, in short, very pretty. But why am I so tired, and why is dinner-time so near, that I cannot tell you, at length, the story of the friends I am visiting? I was saying the other day that it would make a very pretty tale, in one volume; and if I live to spend all I have, like the prodigal son, I shall rather dramatise their story than eat husks.

Tell me, in your next letter, of dear Eliza Farquhar's health and spirits, and of the Archdeacon's progress in liking and assimilating with his neighbours in the Isle of Wight; and after giving abundance of my love to him and to Eliza, offer a slice of it to your Georgina. I think I occupy some place in the memory of Walter and Robert, but cannot think patiently of being a stranger to any creature belong-

ing to you. That you may be blessed here and hereafter, prays your unchangeable friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXX.

TO MISS C. M. FANSHAWE.

Edinburgh, 22d July, 1819.

My dear Madam,

My poor letter was very unfortunate in being so long in arriving. The misfortune was mine, as this delay deprived me not merely of the pleasure of hearing from you, one which you know long since I appreciate highly, but of the satisfaction of writing to you. Why that is so much a gratification I cannot well say. I grow very indolent about writing to some that I love still better because I have known them longer, and because my attention is of some consequence to them, and is of none to you. I generally trace my feelings to their source, and am amused by so doing; but here I am at fault. Can it be vanity? I hope not: but that propensity, like mercury, glides unseen into every aperture, and mingles with every thing it is permitted to approach. Perhaps I am pleased to think that I have any power of interesting one who has lived, like Uriel, in the sun, in the very centre of light and splendour. No matter: listeners, they say, seldom hear good of themselves; nor does strict self-examination, if cordially gone about, produce a very favourable verdict for ourselves, but it ought to produce great indulgence for others.

I am not going, like the Apostle, to make you sorry with a letter, and therefore shall not detail all about the influenza, that was very general in town last spring, and particularly so in our house. I will rather tell you how soon we all recovered, and how well I have been since. . . . . You used to say you liked to hear of *people:* I could tell you much of a frequent visiter I have had this winter—the Sultan of Caucasus, who is certainly, besides being very pious, the most acute and ingenious Tartar imaginable,—if, indeed, he is a Tartar, for I rather think he represents the ancient sovereigns of the Crimea. His appearance is most respectable,—fine looking I should call him: his progress in the language is wonderful, and his occasional orientalisms are very amusing. He asked a young lady from England, who lived with us, how long she had drunk of the waters of Scotland. At another time, dining with a friend of ours, he, in his hurry to attend to a young lady, in handing something to her, overturned a wax candle, which did but discompose her dress: he said little at the time; but on entering the drawing-room afterwards, he walked up to her, and said, "Madam, I hope you have eased your own heart by forgiving me." The Sultan's view is to Christianise his subjects, which is a formidable undertaking, as they are a kind of savage and ignorant Mussulmans, knowing only the worst part of that religion so hostile to all others. When we hear of any one who is much among the more zealous, but less liberal and cultivated Christians who take the greatest share in promoting missions, &c., we are too apt to think that any one much connected with these

good people must share their prejudices, and have the mind narrowed by the association. A man must, however, work with the instruments best suited to his purpose, though these should be neither keen nor bright. But though the Sultan does not reject the aid of sincere people of the above description, he shares only in their sincerity, for his intellect is powerful, and his views are liberal.

You would think me tedious, and perhaps romantic, were I to tell you of a country visit which I lately paid to some friends, at a pretty village ten miles from Edinburgh. At Ormiston, in East Lothian, I was in a real cottage, but a very neat and well-furnished one, inhabited by my beautiful Helen ———, a kinswoman of Mr. Grant's, and who, being an orphan herself, was unto me as a daughter. Her style of beauty gives you the idea of something peculiarly noble and refined; and so she is in mind and feeling. I cannot give you her history; it is too long and too fine to cram into this oglio of a letter: but after much suffering and romantic constancy on both sides, she has, for more than four years, been married to a captain in the navy, now retired on half-pay. He is a worthy of the first order: I think I love him as much as I do her, and that is saying a great deal. Their income is at present limited to his half-pay, but it will be improved, probably, hereafter. They have two very fine boys, and appear to me to live as rational and happy a life as any people I know: they have a garden of half an acre, which is never entered by any workman but the captain, and is as well dressed as if he had served his apprenticeship in the garden of

Eden; and the cottage itself is like a bower of sweets. He is the best tempered, and best hearted person imaginable, with a quiet and tender admiration of his wife, and unspeakable delight in his children: his manners are simple and manly, and his sense is clear and sound, though he has not his Helen's fine imagination or acquirements. I assure you I parted from this happy little family, and their pretty cottage, with no small regret.

Must I give up hopes of seeing you in Scotland, where so many would be glad to see you? Remember me in all kindness to your sisters; and accept Isabella's affectionate regards, with those of your grateful and faithful humble servant,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXXI.

TO MRS. GORMAN.

Dunblane, near Stirling,
24th September, 1819.

My dear Friend,

Your very entertaining and pleasant letter has done much to enliven the stillness of the most peaceable of watering-places: for here we are, after spending three weeks at beautiful Dunkeld, where my daughter Moore was recommended to pass some time for the benefit of her health, which I grieve to say is not yet confirmed. . . . . .

The morning before we left Edinburgh we had the

Laureate to breakfast, that being the only time he could afford to us. I had James Wilson to meet him, a younger and graver brother of John Wilson of the "Isle of Palms." When I speak of gravity, I mean the grave countenance with which he says things irresistibly ludicrous: he is in fact the author of some of the best, at least the most refined wit in Blackwood's Magazine. But to return to the Laureate, I like him exceedingly: he has the finest poetical countenance, features unusually high, and somewhat strong though regular; a quantity of bushy black hair, worn carelessly, but not with affected negligence; deep set, but very animated black eyes; and a countenance serious and collected, but kindling into ardour when animated in conversation. I have heard Southey called silent and constrained: I did not find him so; he talked easily and much, without seeming in the least consequential, or saying a single word for effect. On the contrary, he converses with the feeling and earnestness of one who speaks, not to flourish in conversation, but to relieve a full mind from subjects of frequent meditation. Unless the vile world sours and spoils it, there is always, I think, much good nature associated with real genius. If you ask me about Southey's singular and most laudable household, I will tell you in some future letter of what will surprise and please you, in regard to the very sweetness of his benevolence. I have wandered far from the course of my narration to introduce the Laureate to you; but I want you to like him, and that you will do if I can make you know him.

We, that is Isabella, Moore, and myself, took lodg-

ings in the neat little town of Dunkeld, which stands on the Tay, just at the gate of the Duke of Atholl's house there. The family were, as usual, at Blair, a larger and more magnificent place, about twenty miles further in the Highlands, where they generally receive their company and have their hunting parties. The Duchess very kindly wrote to me, desiring me to take for myself and friends the whole range of her beautiful walks and gardens at Dunkeld; and the neighbours, several of whom I know, were inexpressibly kind, sending me such quantities of fruit, game, and poultry, that I was obliged to send some of it to Edinburgh. The Stewarts of Garth sent a pretty pony for Moore; my delight in seeing her ride and walk through this elysium is not to be told. I wish I could make you understand how exquisite the scenery is betwixt Dunkeld and Blair. . . . . We remained three weeks in all at Dunkeld; but if you wish to know the particulars of my three days' visit to Kinnaird, the dwelling of Mrs. Brunton's chosen friend, Mrs. Izett, and of my meeting with Prince Leopold, on the banks of the Tummel, you must consult a future chronicle to be written by me at more leisure from Jordanhill, where I go on Monday next.

I am now at Dunblane, where salutary waters have been discovered within these few years, and where Moore and Isabella are both, I trust, benefiting. I like exceedingly this place, for which I have a kind of superstitious reverence; the fine remains of the Cathedral are so solemn and so venerable, and the sainted spirit of the revered Bishop Leighton seems to hover around it: then the library, which he en-

dowed, and the populous little town lying in a sheltered hollow among trees; and such walks, too, besides the venerated one which the Bishop planted, and in which he used to meditate on the world he now inhabits. I will, if I can possibly afford it, come here next summer again.

Yes, I have read Charles Grant's * speech at the Bible Society, which is absolutely seraphic. Horace Walpole said of some one who had written a stupid book, that he was as like his book as he could stare. I rejoice to say C. G. is as like his speech as possible.

I am not going to write about the mobs at Manchester and Glasgow, and put myself out of temper. I shall not say more than that I am not the least afraid, nor, in some respects, sorry that those who have been so many years preaching discontent and disrespect to authorities, should have their heels bitten by the curs they have been all this time teaching to growl: it is much easier to let slip these dogs of war than to chain them up; and so their original leaders will find. I am, after all (in haste for the post), dear Mrs. Gorman, yours faithfully and sincerely,

ANNE GRANT.

* Now Lord Glenelg.

LETTER CCXXII.

TO MRS. BROWN.

Edinburgh, 24th February, 1820.

My dear Mrs. Brown,

I did mean to write to you in these days, but I suppose you have long found out that I am, like a true Highlander, very busy or else very lazy, and that my fits of laziness are very apt immediately to succeed fits of over-exertion. I am sure you feel, as I do, much pleasure in hearing from all sides such torrents of eulogium poured out on the tomb of our good King*, and that piety, which presumptuous fools scoffed at when he lived, now become the theme of universal veneration. It is not merely that he is praised; he is now and has been long beyond the reach of human praise: but it is satisfactory to think that the reverence for real worth and genuine piety should be so universal, that those inclined to sneer at what they should venerate, will be afraid and ashamed to show themselves averse to the good cause. This, I trust, will be advanced by the general sentiment which seems so universally impressed on every mind.

You would be amused if you heard the speculation occasioned here by the conduct of the clergy who do, and others who do not pray for Queen Caroline. It is an article of faith among the thorough-going Whigs that she shall receive every honour; others consider her a strolling vagabond who is a disgrace to the country that supports her. The party have been paying great homage to Lord Erskine, and talking of his return to

* George the Third, who died on 29th January, 1820.

Scotland, after fifty-one years' absence, as if a comet had reappeared. I was asked to meet him last Saturday night, and saw him surrounded by all his satellites. He is a shattered wreck of a man, decked with a brilliant diamond star; this decoration I was told he wore as a Knight of the Thistle: I always thought of him with the deep straw bonnet which he wore on his Gretna Green expedition. On Monday the great dinner was given to the Ex-Chancellor; several great persons were expected, but none of them came: I observe that these despisers of rank are wonderfully vain of getting a little to grace their meetings. The Duke of Hamilton and one or two more dignitaries were expected both at the Fox dinner and now, but in vain.

My dear Moore suffers much still from this nervous rheumatism. I trust her long affliction has been sanctified to her: her patience and submission are such as must have a higher origin than mere strength of mind, though in that she is not deficient. Believe me your affectionate friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXXIII.

TO MRS. IZETT, OF KINNAIRD, NEAR DUNKELD.

Edinburgh, 30th March, 1820.

My dear Madam,

I think I need scarcely tell you how sorry I am to find your health so delicate. But this trying winter has been fatal to many invalids, has shaken

all who were not previously in rude health, and even the robust have felt its influence.

I trust you will inhale from the western breeze that passes over the early primroses, that spirit of reviving nature that is so soothing and salutary to all, but most cordial to the sensitive frame and imaginative mind. The dwellers in those countries that know no winter cannot have the delighted enjoyment of spring that to us northerns brings a renewal of existence. If I had not long since forbid myself to repine at petty evils, thinking I ought at least to learn that lesson from my heavy visitations, I should regret a confinement in town at this season. I do, indeed, see a profusion of flowers notwithstanding; but these are piled upon the heads of fair ladies, who try to relieve the sable dress they are confined to, during this general mourning.

I must tell you of a marriage that I think will interest you. It is that of Miss Glassell, an heiress who came to me at fourteen, lived with me seven years, spent the last on the Continent, is returned some months since, and finally is to be married to Lord John Campbell in April, and conclusively, has a great chance to be Duchess of Argyll.

I have been very particularly hurried for a week past. My dear useful Isabella does more than any one else, but cannot do every thing. Moore still requires much of her attention — the house more — and the girls most of all, now that her ostensible, and, in another way, equally useful elder sister is away. I am, dear madam, yours very truly,

ANNE GRANT.

Letter CCXXIV.

TO MISS BAGOT, FULHAM, NEAR LONDON.

Edinburgh, 6th May, 1820.

Madam,

I write to acknowledge your goodness in giving me the particulars so desirable to be known relative to the departure of our inestimable friend, Mrs. Dixon.* She was indeed a precious link, connecting together many kind hearts and worthy minds; and although she has now attained to the prize of her high calling, those who shared in her friendship, and knew how to value that high privilege, will always consider it as a common tie. Thus, I think, you must have felt when you so kindly made me the partaker of the last scene of our dear departed saint's suffering on earth,—the sure prelude to that peace which passeth understanding,—to those joys of which our limited conception can form no distinct idea. I congratulate you on the consciousness of having performed such a duty,—on having accompanied such a spirit to the threshold of a blessed eternity, and on having your memory enriched and your faith exalted by thus witnessing the conclusion of such a life.

I heard frequently of the progress of her illness, but could not bring myself to think that so much

* Mrs. Dixon, relict of Jeremiah Dixon, Esq., late of Fellfoot, Westmoreland, and daughter of John Smeaton, Esq., the eminent civil engineer. Some specimens of her poetical powers may be found in a collection of poems published by Mrs. Joanna Baillie, and many more remain in the possession of surviving friends. Mrs. Dixon is frequently referred to in the early part of these letters. She died on 1st May, 1820.

life could die so early. I had thought of her as the most likely person I knew to attain extreme old age: a frame so robust, a mind so vigorous, such powers of enjoyment, such youthfulness of imagination. I felt, as I did on the death of Mrs. Brunton, as if some affliction quite out of the common course of events had overtaken me. Yet in both cases it was unreasonable, indeed sinful, to feel as if these excellent persons, whose faith was fixed on a Redeemer, and who were ripe for immortality, had been suddenly snatched from the bosom of affectionate friends and the enjoyment of daily doing good. It is our duty rather to think how much they were spared of what their survivors in a more prolonged pilgrimage have to endure in this "land of apparitions, empty shades," where the exercise of our best affections is liable to become the source of the most poignant sorrow.

I think few remain that possess such an assemblage of all that cheers, improves, and delights, as were united in our dear friend, who possessed with the warmest heart and the most serene temper, so many fine and powerful talents, piety so cheerful, so rational, so scriptural,—such candour and such overflowing benevolence. She did indeed seem to love all that she looked upon, and we shall not soon look upon such another. I am, dear madam, with grateful sympathy, your obliged and faithful servant,

ANNE GRANT.

Letter CCXXV.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Edinburgh, 12th May, 1820.

My dear Friend,

We have lately received intelligence of the death of dear Mrs. Dixon, for which Mary is inconsolable, and I, though hardened in the waters of Cocytus, not unmoved. Her death was most exemplary; and her loss will be more felt, I think, than that of any other childless individual that I know of in private life. Of her I hope it may be truly said, that she turned many to righteousness, and made the exercise of her wonderful variety of talent honourable to the cause which lay always near her heart.

I have been much vexed by hearing that my friends Captain and Mrs. ——— are leaving their pretty cottage residence to go to France for the education of their family. Now the antipathy I have to people residing abroad is strong and well founded: there is scarcely any great and lasting evil that has ever been fatal to morals or order in this country but what has originated there. There one of our princes learned to be a heartless profligate, and the other a cruel bigot and apostate from the Catholic faith; from thence flowed the torrent of profaneness and licentiousness that overflowed the country on the return of the Stuarts,—the imported vice becoming comparatively dull and gross in our misty atmosphere. I will not tire you, or irritate myself afresh, by pointing out all the evils past, present, or—worst of all—to come, which have been imported from that Godless

generation; but I must give you the essence of a friend's eloquent declamation on the results of living abroad.—Children, she says, so educated return home as to a strange country,—not able to mark the place where they found the first bird's nest, the burn where they caught the first trout, or any of those dear associations of childhood, that bind us to our native soil by ties as small and as numerous as those by which the Lilliputians bound Gulliver to the earth by his hair: and all this, and much more that is inestimable, must be sacrificed, either because their parents have the vulgar vanity of wishing to be distinguished by what is now, alas, too common to be distinction,—or because, being uneasy in their circumstances, they rather risk the best interests of their children, and rob them of their best feelings, than exercise self-denial, or live in quiet seclusion at home.

But I am interrupted, and gladly quit this painful subject. I am, with much affection for the patriarch, and not a little for his tribe, ever yours,

ANNE GRANT.

Letter CCXXVI.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Moffat, 15th June, 1820.

My dear Friend,

In the midst of comfort, plenty, and the numberless blessings that surround you, I hope, for your own sake as well as mine, that you are beginning to think with some anxiety of the painful pilgrimage of your absent, and too-long silent friend.* Partial as I am to myself, you see I take it for granted that you have missed my letters, which by long habit have become, like many other trifles, a kind of want, though you could do very well without them.

One of my hinderances in writing, besides the anxious state of my mind in looking forward to this journey, was the share that was offered to me in various parties made for Miss Joanna Baillie during her late visit to Edinburgh. Every one was so ambitious to have her, that my claim could not be heard, or was so far deferred that I could not stay to assert it; but she and her sister found means to pay me a long forenoon visit, when we had a good deal of quiet conversation. *Mrs.* Baillie (for so her elder sister chooses to be distinguished) people like in their hearts better than Mrs. Joanna, though they would not for the world say so, thinking that it would argue great want of taste not to prefer Melpomene. I for my part would greatly prefer the Muse to walk in a wood or sit in a bower with; but in that wearisome

* The author had accompanied her youngest daughter Moore to Moffat for the benefit of her health.

farce, a large party, Agnes acts her part much better. The seriousness, simplicity, and thoughtfulness of Joanna's manners overawe you from talking common-place to her; and as for pretension or talking fine, you would as soon think of giving yourself airs before an Apostle. She is mild and placid, but makes no effort either to please or to shine; she will neither dazzle nor be dazzled, yet, like others of the higher class of mind, is very indulgent in her opinions: what passes before her seems rather food for thought than mere amusement. In short, she is not merely a woman of talent, but of genius, which is a very different thing, and very unlike any other thing; which is the reason that I have taken so much pains to describe her. Joanna's conversation is rather below her abilities, justifying Lord Gardenstone's maxim, that true genius is ever modest and careless. Agnes unconsciously talks above herself, merely from a wish to please, and a habit of living among her intellectual superiors. I should certainly have liked and respected Joanna, as a person singularly natural and genuine, though she had never written a tragedy. I am not at all sure that this is the case with most others.

I am keeping off with "bald disjointed chat" what presses heaviest on my mind. I hope you received a letter which Moore, in the fulness of her gratitude, wrote upon receiving your kind invitation. The soft air and salutary springs of Moffat having been prescribed to her, we left Edinburgh last week, and travelled here through such an extent of green hilly country as I had never seen before — one great sheep-

walk, few habitations and few human beings to be seen; yet the general aspect of the country gave such an impression of undisturbed and unlimited freedom as is nowhere else to be met with. We all enjoyed the soft tranquillity, the boundless verdure, and the clear and vocal mountain-streams that crossed or accompanied our path. The tranquillity that soothed my senses did not, however, reach my heart; — that was full of cares and fears, that preyed on it the more from being concealed from my companions. As we approached Moffat, the infant Tweed met us, and we proceeded for some miles along its banks. The "sylvan Jed, its tributary stream," had not yet increased its waters; but the deep ravines in the mountains, and scattered gravel in the narrow plain, showed that even here it could swell and rage occasionally, though now its sweet and placid sounds reminded me of poor Bowles, when, passing by, he thus addressed the same stream: —

> "The murmurs of thy wand'ring wave below,
> Seem to my ear the pity of a friend."

Alas, how often have I been in circumstances where the pity of no earthly friend could avail; and merciful has been the support afforded me, when I have so frequently been enabled, with a bleeding heart, to conduct myself among strangers as if I had neither loved nor mourned to the extent of half my sufferings. In answer to earnest and frequent supplications, I could not lately say, as I ought, "Thy will be done;" — the very possibility of having another fiery trial to go through chilled the blood in my veins.

This did not occur to me on the road, but is an anticipation of what I endured when, on arriving at Moffat, I found my poor patient fevered with fatigue, and coughing violently with new cold. The weather proved cold and wet, and, what was worse, the lodging engaged for us was in a house every way unsuited to such a sensitive creature. After lingering out a few days I succeeded in getting another lodging, which is very excellent and comfortable, new, warm, and full of conveniences. My very dear invalid is now much easier, has slept as much last night as she did in three before; and, in short, my hopes revive. Pray for me, I entreat you. I trust I shall not again be visited with affliction, which neither my mind nor body are so equal to sustain as formerly. My dear good daughters, Isabella and Moore, send you every good wish, along with those of your poor anxious friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXXVII.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Moffat, 28th June, 1820.

My dear Friend,

I was resolved on receiving your very agreeable letter last night, not to sleep without answering it; and am the more anxious to do so, as I see I communicated to you those apprehensions which I was vainly endeavouring to conceal from myself. Before

I tell you of my fears and sorrows, I must tell you that my dear, dear Moore, I humbly thank God, is, though much weakened, entirely relieved from the dangerous symptoms that most alarmed us. Thank God with me for this blessed change! She has walked out every day for some days past; and I occasionally take her out in a carriage, which she enjoys much. To-morrow she begins to bathe in these healing waters, of which she has drunk daily, and found them to agree with her.

I think I shall, when the late fever of my mind has in some measure subsided, amuse you with some account of the place here. It pleases me exceedingly. The state of the poor, which always makes a part of my first concern when I come to a new place, is here very satisfactory. I feel miserable when surrounded with wretchedness that I cannot relieve; but the air of neatness and comfort here, even in the lanes and cottages, is balm to my worn-out feelings. I daily pay a tribute of veneration to the benevolent spirit of the late good Earl of Hopetoun, to whom much of this order and comfort is owing. You must know that there is a considerable stretch of meadow-ground here, upon the banks of the Annan, which has long been accounted the common pasture of this little, neat, rural town. The rage for enclosing and improving has, however, reached even these green mountains and their pastoral dales; and the neighbouring farmers offered a great advance of rent for portions of this fertile meadow. But the Earl (blest be his bones) ordered that it should always be kept as a common grazing

for the town, the inhabitants paying a very moderate consideration for this privilege. Sixty large, fat, full-fed cows make a respectable promenade, lowing through the streets, in the evening, as they proceed to their byres in the back lanes to be milked; and early risers, like myself, who live nearly twice as long as other people, witness their stately progress in the morning going out to their pasture. Much do I delight in the sight of these cows; the plenty they diffuse, and even the quantity of potatoes raised by their means, interest me: but one great charm is, that it reminds me of Albany, of childhood, and of Aunt Schuyler.* Little did she know on what a stormy sea her poor protegée was about to embark, — what she was to witness, and what to endure!

Is it not high time that I should congratulate you on a grand-daughter? I do it as sincerely as if I had politely begun with a compliment. I am glad Mrs. James Smith is safe, and that her daughter is born at home. I grow savage at foreign countries. I hope, however, our gracious Queen will return to the place from whence she came, and no longer persist to go on, like a new Tisiphoné, to kindle the torch of discord where there is already too much. Write to me very soon, I beseech you, and give my love to all around you. I am, ever yours truly,

ANNE GRANT.

* An American lady with whom the author passed some years of her childhood, when residing at Albany in the province of New York. See Memoir prefixed to these Letters, vol. i. p. 6.

LETTER CCXXVIII.

TO MRS. FLETCHER, CALLANDER, PERTHSHIRE.

Moffat, 26th July, 1820.

My dear Mrs. Fletcher,

I cannot easily say how much I was gratified by receiving your very pleasing letter, and observing the spirit of cheerful contentment that breathes through it. I told you, in a letter which I fear has not yet reached you, my impressions of Moffat, and the southern Highlands by which it is surrounded. When any thing pleases me very much I am impatient to have my friends share it. — I have a vision of returning next year, and persuading Mr. Fletcher to try this soft pure air, and the many conveniences which this place affords, which is literally a land flowing with milk and honey: the abundance of roses and bee-hives that bloom and hum, even in the poor people's gardens here, is beyond belief.

I have been agreeably interrupted by a long visit from old Dr. Rogerson*: if you have got my letter you will know of the comprehensive mind, acute and vigorous intellect, of this fine old man. I cannot say how great an advantage the society and kindness of this family has proved to us. My luck of meeting kind and worthy people is worth half, at least, of the purse of Fortunatus, and accompanies me wherever I go. Did you ever hear Mrs. Brunton speak of a

* The late Dr. Rogerson, after residing for many years in Russia as physician to the Empress Catherine, and her successors Paul and Alexander, returned to Scotland, where he purchased extensive estates in the neighbourhood of Moffat, the district in which he was born.

family of the name of Cowan, who possess a great paper-manufactory, and once lived beside her in Edinburgh, and afterwards were her country neighbours at Lasswade? She knew them well, and esteemed them much. Mr. Cowan is a man possessed of much general information, derived from a more extensive library than one usually finds in the possession of a private individual: his wife shares mentally in the treasures of her husband's knowledge, though personally devoted to the care and education of eleven promising and well-trained children. I must tell you a great deal about them when I see you: I shall only tell you now that they are spending the summer here, and are one of the most rational, comfortable, and happy families I know. They have the most admirable cart imaginable, with seats slung in it, that make it a most desirable vehicle: they call for me every day I can go, and take me to see all the old Castles, and Hopes, and strange places in the neighbourhood; and their conversation is a treat such as one does not often meet with. But I will tell you much of them hereafter.

I am quite proud to find my description of the attractions of Callander realised to you; and that you are neither disappointed in the beauty of Mrs. Campbell, or of Loch Lubnaig, both which I think charming in their way, and not the less so from the utter absence of art and ornament in both instances. I can easily conceive what a tent-preaching in the Highlands would be to you: attire so suited to the scene, devotional feeling quiet from its depth and

intenseness, Christians (humble, and therefore real Christians,) sitting, as it were, under the immediate eye of heaven, and psalmody resounding in the open air to Him whose temple is all space. This, as I have more than once experienced, forms a combination producing a fervid exaltation and tender awe which can only be felt. How I pity those who are too fine, or not fine enough, to enjoy, as you did, the simple yet sublime pathos of this act of worship, so calculated to carry back one's recollections to the audience who listened to the Sermon on the Mount, and heard the voice of the incarnate Divinity pronounce — "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." . . . . . .

I have returned for entertainment to a book you will not hold in high respect, even Anna Seward's Letters, which Mrs. Morehead gave me for country reading; and now I must apologise to her memory for the disgust with which I was wont to regard her pedantry, quaint, new-coined phrases, violent prejudices, and some small defects of female delicacy.* Yet, after all, she amuses me much, now that the country and rainy weather have made me less critical, and more grateful for entertainment. She is so sincere and friendly, so capable of tasting the beauties of nature and of poetry, that I try hard to forget her injustice to Cowper, and preference of Chatterton to Burns. I think the safe rule is to weigh the good and evil in a character, and be satisfied if the good preponderates; when it does much more, we may be

* See Letter to Mrs. Smith, of 12th August, 1811.

delighted. Her poetry, on which she prided herself, I cannot taste at all; and her Darwin I cannot endure.

I hope you may receive my letter in as wet a day as this, that you may have patience to peruse it. Your sincerely attached friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXXIX.

TO HER DAUGHTER IN EDINBURGH.

Moffat, 26th July, 1820.

My dear Mary,

I would not write to-night were it not to express Moore's many thanks for your amusing letter. I wrote one of congratulation to Mrs. Wilson, to which I have received a grateful and pleasant answer, — pleasant, as containing a flattering account of poor James. John Wilson's triumph is gratifying, and I greatly rejoice in it.* His excellent and amiable rival, Sir William Hamilton, is like a fine miniature picture, which cannot be viewed too near, and could bear to be seen through a microscope. He retires most honourably from a contest which has produced testimonies to his virtues and abilities, a contest which forced them into observation, and has thrown aside the veil of scrupulous modesty that shrouded

* Mr. Wilson had recently been appointed Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh. Sir William Hamilton, Bart. had been a candidate for the same chair.

his fine qualities and great attainments. Did I not always tell you that Mr. —— was too smooth, too much a *placebo*. I have heard him, more particularly the last time I was in company with him, say the bitterest things with a smooth and smiling countenance. I disapprove of the caricature, which is very ill-timed, and what I call little. Where the love of satire is inherent, one ought to pray against it, as an infirmity always verging sinward, and in this instance particularly undignified.

I continue my *cart*-excursions here with no small satisfaction. My companions are delightful, — the happiest, best, and most intelligent people imaginable. Their cart has such seats, and slings, and springs, as make it quite the king of carts; and the very horse is a sensible, well-behaved animal, worthy of your acquaintance. I think I shall make John comfortable here four days at least, with a proposed dinner at the manse, another at Dr. Rogerson's, and many pleasant strolls to see lakes and old castles, which abound hereabouts. Wat Tinlin's little "lonely tower" (see the Lay of the Last Minstrel) is about a mile off; and the footsteps of Border chivalry have left visible traces all round us. I am sure it is Wat Tinlin's own very tower; and there are iron grates remaining in the two little windows. I would rather have paid a crown for the sight of it than of Kean in Sir Giles Overreach. I don't mean this of Kean himself, but of the atrocious knight.

I hope you are satisfied with what I have done for Mrs. Kean, though it cost me a little headache. It was to please you: but, by the account you gave of

her, if it does her any service, I shall be glad for her own sake. Love of pleasing, you know, is my foible: I wish I could call it the first infirmity of noble minds, as love of fame is the last; but it is often found in minds of no elevated pretensions. Remember, when you set out on your excursion to Loch Catherine, Shylock's proverb: —

> "Fast bind, fast find;
> A proverb never stale in thrifty mind."

My blessing, and a better blessing, go with you and your fellow-traveller. Adieu, your affectionate mother,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXXX.

TO MRS. FLETCHER, CALLANDER.

Jedburgh, 21st September, 1820.

My dear Mrs. Fletcher,

Here I am at Jedburgh, paying a long-promised visit to good Dr. Somerville, who is one of the admirable ever-green old men of whose friendship I am so proud. If I could write a letter to you in which pure description should "hold the place of sense," this place holds out strong inducements; the manse being built just at the corner of the, alas, ruined abbey, of which there are sufficient remains to afford a nook for Presbyterian orgies, and a fine specimen entire, the roof excepted, of pure Saxon architecture. Pray be thankful to me for reserving

the discussion of all the ruin and beauty that surround me till our meeting; for the soft and sad accordance of the autumnal woods with all that speaks of the past, the beauty and singularity of scenery, rich in associations and little trodden by restless tourists, and the "sylvan Jed," which Thomson celebrates with filial fondness, — all that, and much more, must give way to a little of my wonted autobiography.

I think you left me last boasting of the cows, the common people, the bee-hives, and the roses, of Moffat, which is really a place very much after my own heart. I thought I should dwell among all that lowing, and humming, and fragrance, unnoticed and unknown, and had not the least objection to a four-months' sequestration. Dr. Rogerson, himself always entertaining, and his family invariably and cordially kind, furnished variety enough for me; and that Moore could walk and drive, was actual felicity. Yet now and then a passer-by rested a day; but they were desirable, and not frequent. I was, however, asked to meet General Dirom's family at the Doctor's, whom I had known a little in Edinburgh. They rather surprised me by an urgent invitation to Mount Annan, which was re-urged in letters; and I at length agreed to go. I found the visit pleasant far beyond my expectation, and rendered more so by meeting an old and valued acquaintance, sister to Sir John, Sir James, and Sir Pulteney Malcolm, — a lady of much intelligence and a powerful and well-balanced mind, whom I like exceedingly. I found a treasure of real worth and information in

Mrs. Dirom. The place is too fine to be crowded into a hurried description; we saw England distinctly from our windows, which looked on the Solway firth and Cumberland mountains. This visit would afford a little history had I time to detail it.

I also spent a day or two at Dumfries, and saw, with much satisfaction, Burns's "Jean," who is a very comely woman, with plain sound sense and very good manners. She is much esteemed and respected in the place, and lives in the same house that her husband inhabited, in a retired part of the town. The street which she inhabits is now called Burns's Street. Her house is a model of neatness and good taste: the simple elegance with which every thing is disposed is so consistent, and the room in which the hapless bard used to write is still in its former state, as if it were a crime to alter its simple furniture. I was very much struck with the monument erected to Burns in the churchyard of Dumfries, which, by-the-bye, is crowded with such testimonies of the affection borne by the living to the memory of the departed. Burns's monument is placed under an elegant dome or cupola, open at the side, and supported by pillars: it is situated in a little enclosure, in which the holly and the Scotch thistle predominate, and is surrounded by an iron railing. The plan was suggested, not by any passage in his poems, but by a fine one in his dedication to the Caledonian Hunt: "The genius of my country found me, as Elijah found Elisha, at the plough, and threw her inspiring mantle over me." The young rustic is represented with his hand — a rough ploughman's hand — on the plough; his attire

exactly what it ought to be, his neck open, as ploughmen often have theirs, from the heat, which gives a kind of classical ease to the figure, — his bonnet, newly taken off, in the other hand; and his ardent countenance (very like his picture, but younger) lifted up with an expression of mingled awe and admiration to the Genius of Scotland—a fine aerial figure descending towards him, and expanding her mantle as preparing to cast it round him. The execution fully equals the design: I saw nothing in Westminster Abbey to equal it, to my fancy.

While at Moffat, I received a letter from an invisible Irish friend, with whom I have for some years corresponded — Mrs. Gorman, sister to Mr. Bushe, the eloquent Solicitor General of Ireland. The purport of it was to say, that her only unmarried daughter was at Harrowgate, and was determined to see me, as her mother's proxy, our meeting in this world being so unlikely, and that if it suited me to receive her daughter at Moffat, she would go down to see me there. In a day or two after my return she arrived. Judge whether we were partial, when we found Miss Gorman, in countenance and person, in manner and expression, so resembling our dear departed Anne. . . . . I am, with every good wish to the whole family, yours, with affectionate esteem,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXXXI.

TO MRS. GORMAN.

Lowood, near Melrose,
30th September, 1820.

My dear Mrs. Gorman,

I would not have so long delayed expressing my heartfelt satisfaction in knowing you still better than before through the medium of Catherine, if I had been at home, or in any place where I could command a single half hour; but it was only yesterday that I left Dr. Somerville at Jedburgh, a warm-hearted old divine, to whom I had long promised a visit. He is an author, having written a much-approved history of the reign of Queen Anne, and several very effective pamphlets at the time of the French revolution. He is, moreover, one of the king's chaplains for Scotland, and likewise in his eightieth year; he lived with all the Scottish lights of the last century — the Humes, Robertsons, &c. His children are all prosperous and deserving, but they are all established in the world, and he languishes under a famine of the intellect — so it was ordained that he and I were to feast together on recollections. We were indeed a complete contrast to the Athenians, for it was our whole occupation to hear and tell some old thing; so many of those were to be told and heard, that, even with the honest shift of early rising, I could scarcely find time to explore the old Abbey of Jedburgh still fair in its decline, though it stands just behind the manse, far less to admire the beautiful scenery around it.

I am here to-day at Lowood, the villa of Dr. Somerville's son, a very amiable and intelligent lawyer, where I promised to spend two days on my way home. I am writing in a most enchanting little boudoir, in this incomparable cottage, the Tweed sweetly shaded, flowing under my window. In sight of the house on one side is Abbotsford, the seat of Sir Walter Scott; on the other, Melrose Abbey, and those hills of which the old monk said to William of Deloraine —

> "I could say those words to thee
> Which split the Eildon hills in three."

But there is no shunning the quotations that haunt one continually,

> "Where fair Tweed flows,
> Round holy Melrose,
> And Eildon slopes to the plain."

I am just setting off to call at Abbotsford, and shall leave my letter open to tell you of the wizard on my return. . . . . Yes, I have seen the gifted baronet, whose title I can never remember, every now and then calling him Mr. Scott. His daughter and her husband are there, and he is building a cottage for them near his own old Gothic castle: I think I should say it belonged to Walter Scott, though I had not been told. He received me with a cordiality far beyond a common welcome; but I leave all the wonders of Abbotsford untold to celebrate my own self-denial. Did not I refuse an urgent invitation from the Wizard to dine to-morrow? but I have outstaid my appointed time three days already, and have a most unclassical and unpoetical desire to get

home, and hear of my dear Moore. I have left the Castle and all the suits of armour, and their delightful owner, though not without regret . . . . . I am, dear Mrs. Gorman, yours most truly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXXXII.

TO MRS. HOOK, WHIPPINGHAM, ISLE OF WIGHT.

Edinburgh, 15th November, 1820.

My dear Friend,

By this time you must have wondered very much at my silence, and this wonder will not be diminished by finding me obliged to borrow the hand of a friend to account for my silence. My letters to you, so broken by long intervals, form a kind of autobiography, in which I did not wish to leave a chasm: a very slight narrative will give you some idea how I have spent the intervening period since I wrote to you. . . . . .

I now proceed to the tragical part of my history, which I shall make as brief as possible, as I always find that talking much of past sufferings, is like suffering them twice over. About the beginning of last month in coming out of a shop in Princes Street, from which you descend to the street by several steps, I imagine I trod upon the end of my scarf, and was precipitated with great violence to the pavement. I fancy I must have got some twist in the coming down, one of my temples having struck the pavement with

such force as to raise a large protuberance. But this was the smallest part of my suffering; the left thigh was so dreadfully bruised and the sinews so severely strained, that both the surgeons who attended me believed there was a fracture of the bone; in which case, at this age, I could never expect to regain the power of walking. In great mercy I was otherwise dealt with, for it proved that the bone was not broken; so I trust to walk again, though I come on very slowly, scarcely being able as yet to put my foot to the ground. I have been about a month confined and unable to move without assistance, yet I am thankful to say there are reasonable hopes of a perfect though slow recovery. It is almost superfluous to remind you of any thing so self-evident, as the propriety of your soon amusing my convalescence with a long and entertaining epistle. We all send much love to the Archdeacon. Accept in the mean time this proof that, under all circumstances, I am yours, most affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

Letter CCXXXIII.

TO MRS. BROWN.

Edinburgh, 30th December, 1820.

My dear Mrs. Brown,

I write at present merely to show you that I can write, and to congratulate you on that light of mercy which seems to cast a gracious lustre on your decline, on the satisfaction you have in the last acquisition to your family, seeing those so dear to you living together in your sight as heirs of immortality,—all your children so dutiful, so united, so exemplary, and so prosperous, yet using the things of this world as not abusing them; and last and least, upon your new possession in a place endeared by so many recollections, both of pleasure and pain. If I should envy any one, it would be you. I sincerely pray for the continuance, as long as seems good to the great Dispenser, of all these blessings. Others you possess that are, though unseen, more durable and precious, and from which even I am not debarred, though regarding them with tremulous hope. Pray that my late suffering may be sanctified to me, and that the many painful vigils I have spent in anxious thought and self-accusation may not have been in vain.

One happy result of the lameness occasioned by my late dangerous fall is, that it furnishes me with a fair pretext for staying at home all this winter. An acquaintance daily widening, to me who find it

necessary, on many accounts, to be on good terms with those who can be serviceable to my family, creates a great waste of time, not so pleasantly spent as the evenings devoted to my family circle; and, this winter, politics run so high, that I have a chance of being hurt and discomposed by the violence of opinion which mingles in ordinary conversation. Since I came to the dining-room, I see visiters in the forenoon, but no evening company. Adieu, my dear old friend; I am going to take a lesson on my crutches. My best kind wishes attend Robert and his Highland wife, and believe me very much yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXXXIV.

TO MRS. HOOK, WHIPPINGHAM, ISLE OF WIGHT.

Edinburgh, 17th January, 1821.

My dear Friend,

The instant I laid down your letter I took up my pen, to do as I would be done by, and answer it without delay. Now, being a person of strong faith, not shaken by adverse probabilities, I do believe you are anxious to know how I am. I must however remind you, that, while you were the very first to whom I wrote after my late accident, you were the very last of all my friends to make even an inquiry about me. I tell you this to alarm you about your besetting fault and infirmity; for the spirit of procrastination is an evil one, and ought to be laid in the

Red Sea like other refractory spirits; one does not know when or where its evil influence may cross one's path. The visit of your beloved sister Eliza entirely satisfied us as to your health, well being, and occupations; in the clear mirror of her mind we saw the dear absent, as Surrey saw his love in the magical glass. So this rebuke is merely meant to warn you in other cases.

As for Queen Caroline, I could not possibly be more fully convinced of her guilt now, than I was before she landed in this country, seeing, as I do very frequently, many of our countrymen and others who have resided in Italy; and I am to this hour convinced that she would never again have polluted the British soil, if she had not been urged by the faction who have made her their instrument. Since the mob did break loose, it appeared to me best, to use an old Scotticism, that they should run the length of their tether — *Anglice*, throw off the mask and appear in native deformity. When I was at Abbotsford last autumn, Walter Scott said that he considered the populace under the influence of a temporary delirium, and agreed with me in expecting a sudden and great revulsion. The nature of the frenzy indeed was such that it could not last, unless, as in the Old Testament times, an evil spirit from the Lord had gone forth for our destruction. My zeal was not less than yours, but my faith is stronger.

Now that the spirit of loyalty has awaked like a giant from his wine, the Whigs here are put to their very last shift to blow up the embers of their dying popularity. They have lately had a Fox dinner

where they mustered five hundred, and made many verbose speeches. The Pitt dinner, on the same day, and without effort or recruiting, assembled seven hundred. My son was there, and was much delighted: there were only short pithy speeches, and, like the angel Michael, they brought no railing accusation: nothing could be more cordial, joyous, and gentleman-like than the whole proceedings. I expect some of my Whig friends to come boasting of their superiority in clever speeches, but my answer is prepared. I shall tell them, in the first place, that the speakers among them are talkers by trade; and, next, remind them that the most elegant opposition-speeches any where to be met with are to be found in Milton, and were inspired by the despair of those angels who found they were defeated in their attemps to aspire to a higher place; and that we do not hear of laboured diatribes among the faithful spirits, but are told of their exquisite music, and that

> "They eat, they drink, and with communion sweet,
> Quaff immortality and joy."

I must not forget to tell you about myself after all. I walk round the room on crutches, but am still very helpless, rest ill, and suffer considerable pain at night; yet my health, thank God, is very good, my spirits are very equal, and my recovery is progressive, though slow. What a provoking person the Archdeacon is to churl us of the wit and humour that he can squander so profusely when he chooses: witness the "Cama Gustapha." I know not when I was so much diverted: I wish I was near him to

tear the napkin from his talent. Adieu, my dear friend: I am ever most truly, most kindly, yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXXXV.

TO MRS. HOOK.

Edinburgh, 19th February, 1821.

My dear Friend,

Though I am sure I did right in telling you exactly what I thought and felt about your silence, believe that when I read your letter I grieved as if I had done some evil thing: the state of your health and your load of care and avocation were so vividly set before me, and you took my rebuke so meekly too, that I had a perfect heartache. I was grieved, indeed, to find your health so much worse than I had imagined, though I never expected it to be perfect.

I am glad you have made acquaintance with Wordsworth. The Edinburgh Review has done its utmost to laugh him out of fashion, but without success. His simplicity is sometimes too simple, and his metaphysics too metaphysical; but the purity, the feeling, the unworldly spirit of his poetry, when you combine what you know of his spotless life and warm domestic affections, must enchant every unsophisticated mind. I hope you are reading the "Excursion." I am older than you, though I fear not the wiser for travelling over more arches of

Mirza's bridge; so, presuming on my experience, I will tell you how to read said Excursion. Lay it on your table, and when worldly cares and forms have wearied, or when the languor that no one can always escape besets you, open it by chance, and you will not go far without being led into scenes of humble pathos, that will rebuke petty vexations, or pure and lofty speculations, that will soon banish the short apathy of an over-laboured mind. People laugh at the Pedlar; I do not: all the realities of life are so familiar to me, and the peculiarities of Scotch manners, such as they were fifty years since, have left so vivid an impression on my mind, that I can easily conceive a pedlar reading Milton, and trudging under his pack, cheered by sublime flights of fancy or occupied in profound meditation. The peasant or mechanic, who half spells a chapter in the Bible on a rainy Sunday, no more resembles him who, bred up in the land of story and of song, reads the Scriptures from infancy with an intelligent mind and awakened feelings; — such a one is no more to be compared to the dull unfeeling clown who reads mechanically, than the crater of Etna to a bottle-manufactory. Whoever reads the Bible with a mind open and prepared by previous discussion, and with a certain degree of imagination, has nothing more to learn of the sublime and pathetic; moreover, he will not find the transition to Milton very difficult.

I can scarcely believe that any one has more vivid enjoyment of the Scotch novels, and Wordsworth's Excursion, than myself; for I am convinced there does not exist a person in decent station, with a mind

in any degree cultivated or capable of refinement, who has had more intercourse with the lower classes. In the first place, I was assiduous in learning the language of the country where my lot was thrown. Long days have I knit my stocking, or carried an infant from sheaf to sheaf, sitting and walking by turns on the harvest field, attentively observing conversation which, for the first years of my residence in the Highlands, I was not supposed to understand. Seldom a day passed that I did not find two or three petitioners in the kitchen, respectfully entreating for advice, medicine, or some petty favour. Often I sat down with them, and led them to converse, captivated with the strength and beauty of their expressions in their native tongue. It would not be easy to make you comprehend how often the duties of a Highland housewife subject her to the necessity of communion with her inferiors. Here, in Edinburgh, where all the pleasures and troubles of such intercourse might be supposed at an end, scarcely a week passes but some poor native of Laggan comes to entreat me to write a letter, or in some way interest myself in behalf of them or their children; and I never refuse. I cannot complain of the world; since I have embarked in it I have met with kindness, and even, in some instances, unhoped-for approbation: yet there is nothing that comes so cordially home to my heart as the murmur of remembered affection, which, through different channels, reaches my ear from the humble dwellers in the cottages at Laggan.

When you write, tell me what other books you have been lately reading, — whether you have tasted

the delicacies of Barry Cornwall's Muse, and whether you know any thing of Mrs. Hemans's elegant poetry. . . . . Why did you not write to Lord John Campbell as you intended? Your congratulations would gratify him; and certainly never was there a happier man — never one to whom the birth of a son gave more consequence: the joy of the Clan Campbell is not to be told. I must not forget to tell you that the Highland Society of London have assigned to me the Prize gold medal for the best Essay on the past and present state of the Highlands: I wrote it Christmas last, when staying at Ammondell, with Mrs. Henry Erskine, and sent it away with scarcely a hope of success.

My poor Moore is still a great invalid. I am now free of pain, but cannot yet walk alone. My son is full of care with the thoughts of entering on business for himself: there is no just ground of fear; his conduct is just what it ought to be, and his abilities all that could be wished. Accept warm regards from all my family; and say something more than commonly kind for me to the Archdeacon, whom I admire for his talents, esteem for his virtues, and love for some of his faults. To your children commend me; also very tenderly to Eliza, the well beloved and well deserving. Adieu, kindly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXXXVI.

TO MRS. BROWN.

Edinburgh, 6th March, 1821.

My dear Mrs. Brown,

I write to congratulate you on the birth of your grandson, which I think an act of great good nature in me, considering how I have been slighted and overlooked on this occasion. I am not sure that I should have done so, were it not for the consideration that the youth is half a Highlander. William sent me a notification of his last son's birth, which I took very kindly, little supposing that I should be thus neglected by my old friend Robert. But thus it was from the beginning; — of the first brethren ever we heard of, the younger was better than the elder.

Your sun appears serenely bright in its decline; I know no one more enviable. To have all one's nearest relations every thing one could wish in worth, prosperity, duty and affection, is very much; but to have those new members that are grafted into the family, over whose early instruction you had no influence, so amiable, exemplary, and so much attached to you, is still more, as being of more rare occurrence.

Taking it for granted that you will find some short interval, while little master sleeps, to care about me, I will tell you what you will not be pleased to hear, — that I have for some time past made little or no progress in recovery. They flatter me that rheumatism, induced by the strain, is the cause of my

helpless days, and in some degree of my restless nights, and that warm weather and sea-bathing will restore the locomotive faculty. If I should continue lame, I shall comfort myself that I am not blind, and that active and willing feet are stirring for me. There is scarcely any mere personal and local infirmity I could endure but what is compensated by the Divine Goodness, in bestowing on me such a daughter as Isabella, whose cheerfulness, as well as her activity, seem always to rise to the occasion; and who seems to have a real delight in renouncing all that others take pleasure in, in order to watch over a mother and a sister whom she loves with an affection that seems to absorb all earthly feelings, and, notwithstanding the delicacy of her frame, attends with unwearied exertion, — supported, no doubt, by more than earthly strength. In her I have not only a pleasant companion, a diligent and tender nurse, and most unwearied affectionate friend, but an example of Christian faith and meek and humble piety, which I ought to value above all the other aid I receive from her. I feel a thorough conviction that this visitation is meant for my benefit: rationally speaking I know that all afflictions sent from above are so; but there is a great difference between the mere assent of the understanding and a felt conviction.

Can you suppose any thing more provoking than what has happened to the poor Edinburgh Reviewers, deprived as they are of a favourite theme on which they used as many repetitions as the Pharisees. How can they possibly go on without their wonted tirade about the Catholics? They will find consolation

in comparing themselves to the far-famed mouse that gnawed the lion's toils: I am sure they will take the whole credit of this measure of Emancipation to themselves. . . . . Moore is very angry at me for writing so long, while she waits to drill me to the use of my crutches, by the aid of which I perambulate the room. She, however, joins with me and the rest in all manner of gratulation on the late happy accession to your family. Believe me, ever your attached friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXXXVII.

TO MISS. GORMAN, BAGOT STREET, DUBLIN.

Edinburgh, 29th April, 1821.

My dear Catherine,

"Chief of all Kates, my super-dainty Kate," how I should reproach myself for being so long in writing to you if I could possibly have helped it; and how difficult I find it to supply a sufficient fund of gratitude for all the good people that sorrow over "poor Mrs. Grant's" late accident, and come "frequent and full," every forenoon, to tell her so. Society in Edinburgh is like a rapid mountain-stream, that pours down in winter, filling to overflow all its banks, and in summer subsides into a silent and scarce visible rill. All the people attached to the law, which indeed are *the* people of Edinburgh, are obliged, with their families, to stay in town till the Court of Session rises in July; then every creature is seized with the rural

mania; and this town, with all the green delights of groves and grassy hills, which are visible from every part of it, is as much forsaken as if the Roman malaria had taken possession of it. You saw it at the lowest ebb; and I am glad you did so, because we now know each other better than we could have done if the swarm had been in the hive. Yet, having seen it in this state of repose, I could wish you saw it again, glowing with busy life, and gay with the flutter of all those human butterflies, that reverse the habits of the genuine ones who frolic in summer and daylight, while those make their circles in winter and at night. I think you will hardly believe, though I should tell you, how much I am reconciled to my lameness, so far as it prevents me from flying abroad like an owl amidst these gaily-coloured flutterers.

I think it was since I wrote to you last that an event occurred that created general regret here, and that I felt very sensibly; it was the death of our distinguished physician, Dr. Gregory. He had all the simplicity of a truly great mind,—never in his life said or did any thing for effect,—yet all he said and did was effective. His bounty amounted to munificence, and his professional skill was given as freely as his other benefactions; he never took a fee from a clergyman's family, from a student, or from a subaltern. His wit was always ready, and he seemed quite unconscious that it was wit. Of his learning it is enough to say, that he was not only famed for the elegant latinity of his writings, but that he conversed in Latin as fluently as in English. Much also might be told of his un-

spotted life, of his tenderness as a husband and a father, and of his generous and devoted loyalty.

I am reading the Life of Queen Elizabeth, by Miss Aikin: you will be much entertained with it, if it comes in your way; nay, you should go out of your way to get it, were it only to see with what exquisite skill the wizard of Abbotsford has, in Kenilworth, strung the pearls of truth on the silken cord of fancy, only collecting them from different times and places, and, by a little harmless anachronism, bringing them into a connected series, and thus throwing clearer light on those characters which contemporary writers had drawn so faithfully, and which he has coloured with all the fresh hues of actual life. I was rather surprised to see this same book (I mean Miss Aikin's) so well written as it certainly is: yet the hardness, not to say the harshness, of her cast of mind, is obvious in the manner in which she speaks of Anne Boleyn, and of our unhappy Queen Mary.

Did I ever ask you if the writers in Blackwood's Magazine have actually any acquaintance with your uncle the Solicitor-General, whom they often speak of with such seeming delight, under the appellation of "Charlie Bushe?" Tell me very particularly of your mother's health, and of both your sisters, and of every one in whom you have interested me. Write very soon to your affectionate friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXXXVIII.

TO MRS. BROWN.

Edinburgh, 26th May, 1821.

My dear Mrs. Brown,

I am glad to hear that your dear afflicted sister conducts herself under her late bereavement* as a Christian ought to do, who has walked so long in paths of pleasantness, and had so great a share, not only of every thing desirable in this world, but of those that the world can neither give nor take away, in the dispositions and principles of all who are nearest and dearest to her. The weakness of humanity is such—I mean unassisted humanity—that good lost weighs more in grief than gained in joy; and the more that is bestowed the readier we are to murmur when it is withdrawn. But her humility is such, that she must be deeply sensible how graciously she has been dealt with, and I think is in less danger of indulging sins of presumption than most even of experienced Christians. . . . . .

It is time I should tell you, with deep thankfulness for the mercy I have experienced, that my dearest Moore is, though very weak, decidedly better; but I could not, without self-reproach, speak of the days of anxious misery that I have lately passed on her account. About ten days ago she burst a blood-vessel in a fit of coughing, and kept us all for some time in the greatest anxiety. I really, for near a week, had

* This letter alludes to the recent death of James Smith, Esq. of Jordanhill.

scarcely a hope of her recovery. For two days past the signs of convalescence have been distinct and progressive, and I seem to breathe another air; but I am somewhat shaken by the painful suspense. I should have written to your sister, but did not like to give her the uneasiness which my distress would occasion. Pray tell her how much better Moore is. I am, with much affection, yours very truly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXXXIX.

TO MRS. SMITH, OF JORDANHILL, GLASGOW.

Edinburgh, 24th June, 1821.

My dear Friend,

You would have heard from me sooner, had I any tolerable degree of tranquillity; but you know too well how my sore attention is tied down. My fluctuating hopes and fears about my dearest Moore would rather disturb than interest you; and you would be concerned to see your old friend, who is drawing so near the verge of time, showing so little submission to the Divine will, and such an unhallowed earnestness to detain a suffering creature from that felicity for which faith and patience have so long been preparing her. As far as medical information goes, I am warranted in saying that Moore is better; she suffers no pain, sleeps a great deal, and takes a little more nourishment: but her great weakness still keeps the hope I cherish, like a feeble taper held in a trembling

hand, and liable to be blown out by the first blast. I cannot say that I am, as I ought to be, resigned; yet I hope that if what is unquestionably best for her, though to me most painful, should take place, that aid from above, which has been on other occasions granted to my prayers, will not be withheld. The same Arm that has supported me through a series of deprivations such as few have encountered is still powerful to help in time of need, and the fountain of mercy cannot be exhausted.

I am pleased to hear that you seek in your solitary and beautiful shades, that quiet communion with your own spirit and the blessed memory of the departed, which is best found where fresh air and the fair face of nature add their soothing influence to one's better thoughts and higher hopes. Now that your paramount task of duty has been fulfilled, you must and will feel a vacancy which sorrow alone cannot fill up; and even the aspiring of the spirit to such objects as ought to be at this period our chief concern, cannot, through the weekness of humanity, always engross us. You, more than others, from the timid and pensive turn of your mind, require exertion and strong interest in others to prevent you from drinking the bitterest dregs of sorrow in the mournful stagnation of the mind which succeeds too often to deep emotion. . . . . .

You know by this time that you are going to be told how good it is for you to employ yourself about your poor dying nephew; for such I understand he is. To tell him exactly of his situation would be a very strong measure, which I think I should hardly have courage for. It seems a merciful dispensation of

Providence that the very nature of that disorder screens danger from the eyes of the sufferer; even the most pious and resigned young people in that circumstance cherish the hopes of life to the last hour. It seems like boldly lifting a veil that nature has kindly spread between them and their early grave to announce their fate directly. Yet I think there is a middle course to be held, by speaking strongly and frequently of the departure of young people who have died of the same disease, and who had seen and prepared for their approaching end.

Now as to your son and his boys, you have been, and will be of the utmost use to them, though they will not be so dependent upon you as in infancy. Believe me, with much less power and even with less principle than you possess, any one who sets earnestly about it will do good; and whenever you find despondency assume this form, examine yourself and say, "Is this rational, or may I not suspect that it comes of a timorous and mistrustful spirit, which was always the sin that most easily beset me?" Adieu, dear friend: to you only I write in these anxious days, for I ever am yours, affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

Letter CCXL.

TO MRS. GRANT, LATE OF DUTHIL, STRATHSPEY.

Edinburgh, 25th June, 1821.

Dear Madam,

The last winter has been to me such a series of suffering, either for myself or others, that I have but a confused recollection of all that passed. I spent a pleasant summer,—I fear the last to which I shall apply that epithet. The pleasure consisted in spending it quietly with a very dear part of my family, Isabella and Moore, at Moffat. My dearest Moore was so much better that she rode and walked out, and had some enjoyment of that sweet place, and of the fine weather that showed all its beauty to advantage.

Perhaps you have heard of the terrible fall I got, on my return, down the steps of a shop in Prince's Street, which has the effect of still confining me to my crutches. I had, however, many reasons for thankfulness notwithstanding this accident; my health was and is perfect, no way affected by the confinement, which I did not feel as a hardship, being surrounded by domestic comforts, and every hour visited by friends who doubled their kindness in the time of distress. But of late I have been surrounded by sorrows such as human friendship cannot alleviate; and the fear of a heavier calamity hovers over me like a thick cloud pierced by some feeble rays of hope. Two valuable old friends, whose kindness to me was brotherly, and who long honoured and bene-

fited me by their correspondence, have paid the debt of nature. They were both some years above eighty, and well fitted, by the spotless life and the faith that faileth not, for the better country to which they are removed.* . . . . . .

But a nearer sorrow has lately claimed my sympathy for the surviving sufferers, as well as my sorrow for my own loss, — the death of Mr. Smith, of Jŏrdanhill, so generally and deservedly esteemed and beloved, who had been my friend for forty years, and whose amiable and delightful manners won every heart that was worthy of knowing him; who was a blessing not merely to his own family, but to the community among whom he lived, and who showed essential kindness with so much delicacy, that it was a pleasure to be obliged to him. This excellent man led, in the bosom of a most deserving family, a life so happy, prosperous, peaceful, and temperate, that we all thought his life might be prolonged, for a blessing to all around him, to the latest period allotted to humanity. But it was otherwise ordered: he died as peacefully and serenely as he lived, suffering not ten minutes' illness. Here was another home to which I could always go when I found the quiet of the country, and the cordial of confidential friendship, necessary for the relief of my worn-out mind. Mrs. Smith has Jordanhill for her lifetime, and I shall still there find a retreat when I require it, but, alas,

* The late John Richardson, Esq., of Pitfour, Perthshire, and John Hatsell, Esq., for many years First Clerk of the House of Commons, are the friends here alluded to.

deprived of the light that once warmed and cheered it; and there I must look for a dejected widow, instead of her who was once the happiest of women.

It is with reluctance that I return to the home-felt distress that now presses heaviest upon me, in the threatening illness of my darling Moore. The undefinable disorder which for some years hung about her, in the shape of a most irritable sensitiveness in one side, took a more alarming appearance this spring in the breaking of a blood-vessel, which was accompanied with—possibly occasioned by—cough, that has very much reduced her. Yesterday she seemed very low, and suffered what I cannot express; to-day she seems better, and I try to cherish a gleam of hope. All this is about myself and my feelings, but in a correspondence that has outlived so long a period, apologies for this kind of communication are unnecessary in the present circumstances: if I did not think you were more interested about me and mine than any thing else I could tell you, I would not write thus to you.

Now let me hear much of your family history: I never see one from your quarter now, and am a great stranger to what goes on. I should except the Miss Grants of Grant, whom I saw in winter, but not long enough to hear much from them. You are certainly in my debt before the writing of this letter, which you would think a meritorious one if you knew the state of mind in which I write it. Isabella, the most precious of daughters, and the most unwearied attendant on a sick bed, begs to be

particularly remembered to you and your Matilda. I am ever, with regard, dear Madam, yours truly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXLI.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Edinburgh, 8th July, 1821.

My dear Friend*,

When I wrote to you last I think I was quite diffusive, being in a most painful and restless fluctuation of mind, incapable of application, and forbid to stay long beside the treasure of my affections, because all excitement was to be avoided, and my presence was supposed to produce that effect beyond any other. I wrote on, as if that occupation would suspend the anxiety that preyed on me.

I have much to say of her, whose every word and look it is comfortable to remember, — even the aspect of smothered pain, because it enhances my gratitude for her relief. You wish to know how we are? I shall if possible be concise. After my last letter to you was finished the interval was all keen anguish; but the moment that I saw the eyes that shed a calm and steady light over my existence close placidly in final repose, was to me more tranquil than any I had

* The following letter refers to the death of Mrs. Grant's youngest daughter, Moore, whose illness has been so frequently adverted to in the previous correspondence. She died at Edinburgh on 1st July, 1821, in the 25th year of her age.

for a long time experienced: I was enabled, and so were we all, to contemplate quietly and thankfully the beloved countenance over which the dim shadow of incessant pain had hung for years without destroying its serenity. Isabella was enabled, notwithstanding her worn-out strength and spirits, to act at the time with the most perfect self-command; and Mary, whose nerves are apt to yield on such occasions, seemed supported in a manner that astonished me. Her brother, giving way to tears of unconquerable sorrow, was, alone, unable to govern himself. — No wonder; she was the endeared companion of his childhood, and the trusted friend and counsellor of his youth, whose society he preferred to that of any human being, and to whom he always showed unvaried kindness and tenderness. In a word, we are all convinced that we have been mercifully dealt with, in the taking away of our valuable patient from the evil to come; and the more we think back on what she suffered, the more we are ready to say, "Good is the will of the Lord."

There is no consolation for you and for me like thinking of our age. I know you will pray for me; I hope not in vain, though now the cloud is thick around me. Accept all our affectionate regards from your attached

ANNE GRANT.

Letter CCXLII.

TO MRS. IZETT, KINNAIRD HOUSE, DUNKELD.

Jordanhill, near Glasgow,
21st August, 1821.

My dear Madam,

Though I did not see your tribute of sympathy so soon as that of some other friends, I had not the smallest doubt of your kindness for me individually, or of the sympathy which your humanity would afford to so great a sufferer as myself.

You will wish to know how I bear this new deprivation. Thank God, I have been supported under it in a manner that I could not have hoped. My dear Moore, whom I certainly considered as the treasure of my existence while she was spared to me, has left me an example of patience and fortitude such as was consistent with her habitual piety and uncommon strength of character, but such as I thought was far beyond my power to imitate. Think of a creature suffering for nearly four years, without being for one minute free from pain and a degree of fever more or less, yet all the while serene and calm, with unbroken spirits, and still adding to those stores of useful knowledge which her strong clear intellect was so well calculated to turn to account; while there was so sound a judgment, and such a complete disdain of all pretension and display, and such perfect rectitude and sincerity, that I think I could conscientiously affirm that in all her life she never spoke a word with a view to effect, and that she never said on any occasion what she did not think. She was the only *young person* I

ever knew for whom all other young people, who lived in the same house, entertained a high degree of respect softened by affection. This is an acquisition belonging to more advanced life; — but she was respectable and respected at fifteen. Her affections were concentrated in a few friends and her own family, and they partook of the strength and steadiness of her character. Think, dear madam, what it was to be the object of fervent affection to such a mind, — to find in one's own child the most pleasing and rational companion, the enlightened and attached friend, and the most judicious and upright counsellor! Alas, I have not time to pour out the fulness of a mind rich in recollections of all that purifies and exalts our common nature, in a process of suffering through which she was ripened for immortality.

I have been for three days here with my dear widowed friend Mrs. Smith, whose conduct on this, as on all other occasions, is exemplary. She is better, but not well. You will hear from me soon again, and will not tire of the history of a wounded mind. Adieu, dear madam: I am, in haste, but with great regard, yours very truly,

ANNE GRANT.

Letter CCXLIII.

TO MRS. HOOK.

Glenleven Cottage, near Greenock,
28th September, 1821.

My dear Friend,

I received your letter, which would have given me pleasure if the writing of it had not obviously given you pain. My health, I thank God, is almost miraculous; therefore, when the first pangs of mental suffering are over, and I have leisure to consider how near the time approaches that must conclude all mere earthly suffering, — when I think of those whose shadows seem ever hovering over my solitude, and can say with full assurance,

> "Safe are they lodg'd above these rolling spheres,
> The fatal influence of whose giddy dance
> Sheds sad vicissitude on all below,"

I return to my wonted occupations with a composure that surprises myself, and think that I have brought my mind to be all that it ought to be, till a sudden rush of recollection awakens all that I dread and shun. Few have been tried in such a furnace as that through which I have been enabled to walk; but advancing life brings sorrows with it, for which the mind should be in some measure prepared before they arrive. The great panacea in such cases must be trust in God, and hope in a Redeemer: but even physical aids are not to be slighted in these terrible exigences; exercise in the open air, solitary walks, — not lounging or sauntering, but such as to make rest enjoyment, — and, above all, constant occupation.

I am now paying a short visit to the Miss Stewarts, once of Albemarle Street, but now of Edinburgh, who have here, in an unrivalled situation on the banks of the Firth of Clyde, a beautiful cottage fitted up in the perfection of good taste, surrounded with fine grounds, surmounted by a respectable ruin of a castle, and overlooking, from the eminence on which it stands, the whole estuary of the Clyde. On the opposite side is the Holy Loch, backed by the rugged and picturesque mountains of Argyleshire. You, I think, will remember these districts of the mountain and the flood, where your young imagination was kindled with the love of wild and wondrous nature. Christina Stewart would have been a wonderful creature with timely cultivation: as it is, she has energy and originality of mind that is surprising when one considers the ordeal she has gone through. Never, sure, was wealth applied better than hers. She has been long enough a worshipper in the temple of Plutus to set prudent bounds to the native generosity of her disposition, and to have that insight of character which a strong mind was likely to acquire in such a situation. My paper bids me say no more, but that I am, with sincere affection, yours ever,

ANNE GRANT.

Letter CCXLIV.

TO MRS. GORMAN, BAGOT STREET, DUBLIN.

Edinburgh, 23d October, 1821.

My dear Mrs. Gorman,

I perused your last letter with a mournful satisfaction, finding that mine had done what I much wished, but scarcely hoped to accomplish, that is, conveyed to you a reflection of that pure and powerful intellect, those concentrated affections, and that character of lofty rectitude, softened and sustained by true Christian humility, which is impressed on my heart, and forms the treasure of my secret meditations. I do not say, "Turn, hopeless thoughts, turn from her;" I rather think of her too constantly to be startled or saddened by any circumstance that brings her image in livelier colours before me.

You know already that, in consequence of a kind invitation from my dear friend Mrs. Smith, I spent part of the autumn at Jordanhill, and was accompanied by both my daughters. I afterwards went with Isabella to visit a friend, who has a pretty marine cottage on the estuary of the Clyde. My son joined us there, and then proceeded to Edinburgh, where he was soon followed by Mary, who went to prepare the desolate house which we had never entered since she, whose loss we are now lamenting, was carried from it. We dreaded this return very much, but found it more painful than our worst fears had imagined. My dear friend, I will spare you the detail; for why should I, who can so little please or benefit you, afflict you with the renewal of sorrow?

And now from my very heart I congratulate you on your son's hallowed choice and peaceful entrance on a life that must be happy, when entered on from right motives, and pursued with an earnest desire to promote the Divine Master's will and the good of his creatures. Of your son's abilities and acquirements I am inclined to think favourably: but though these were far inferior to what I am told they are, you may assure him, however discouraging appearances may be at first, and however untoward the flock destined to be fed by a humble and faithful shepherd, who considers preaching as the easiest part of his duty, and draws his people by the bonds of love, yet faith, time, and patience will have their perfect work; and however slow the process, the toil will meet its rich reward in the affectionate veneration, and, what is still better, the gradual improvement, of the most obdurate of souls committed to his charge. I cannot give vent to half of what I feel and think on this subject: I know you take a right view of it, and understand what the pious Hannah felt when she carried up her son to minister in the temple.

I am going to ask what is not an irrelevant question to this interesting subject. Have you read the "Annals of the Parish," by Mr. Galt? Ordinary readers think the book tame and vulgar, and some great faults it certainly has. But by the higher class of readers it is admired for its unique simplicity, and for its illustrating so completely the position which it seems to have been the object of the author to establish; that is, that among simple country people a clergyman even of the humblest scale of intellect, with

the most perfect ignorance of the world and of literature, may, by the mere power of good intentions and an earnest wish to preach the Gospel in its purity, be, under all these disadvantages, useful, happy, and beloved. What then must be the pre-eminent power over the human mind, of him who should unite the zeal and humility of the lowly village preacher with knowledge, talent, and that refinement that keeps a jealous guard upon propriety!..... I am writing too long by candle-light, and my family are talking round me; I fear, therefore, you will hardly make out my meaning. I am, dear sympathising friend, yours most truly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXLV.

TO THE REV. WALTER HOOK*, WHIPPINGHAM RECTORY, ISLE OF WIGHT.

Edinburgh, 13th November, 1821.

My dear Walter,

An old friend, not, I trust, forgotten by you, thus reminds you of much affection and kindness subsisting between your family and hers, in spite of great distance and long absence. Many sorrows have combined with the intervening years to chill common intimacies; but in this the heart was too much concerned to yield to the common accidents of life.

Your dear mother informs me that you have chosen

* Now Vicar of Leeds, and Chaplain in Ordinary to Her Majesty.

the Church for your profession. On all accounts, and in every view that can possibly be taken of it, I see cause to congratulate you upon your choice: even in a worldly view, your liberal and highly-endowed Church has great temporal rewards to bestow on those who are qualified to support and adorn her; and you have friends whose influence can bring your merit fairly into view. But I hope and trust this is with you but a secondary consideration. Doing good, which I conclude to be your ambition, is like the quality of mercy, which, as your favourite Shakspeare says, blesses the giver as well as the receiver. There is no good which you do in singleness of heart, but which will reflect back upon you in the purest self-gratification as well as in the gratitude of its object;—spiritual good I mean more especially; and, believe me, that in doing spiritual good you greatly enlarge your power of doing temporal good, that is, you make your means go much further. I suppose you to begin your ministration in a country parish, and am willing to ascribe to you not only zeal tinctured (as all young zeal must be) with enthusiasm, but also perseverance and a kindly and compassionate indulgence even for the ignorant and sensual. If the purity of your doctrine, and the earnest manner in which you deliver it, has the happy effect of raising the minds of the poorer class to those superior enjoyments in which the rich and poor can share alike, they will become more resigned to the humble lot appointed for them, more industrious, more frugal, more ready, like our poor people, to assist each other. It is inconceivable what effect a clergyman, with youth on his side, and a mind truly devoted to the

service of his Divine Master, may produce in a country parish. If a clergyman is not beloved and revered in any place where he has for any length of time proclaimed the Gospel of peace, and adorned his doctrine by his conduct, the people must differ very much indeed from any that I have known.

I think that in England you apply the term enthusiasm, as regards religion, in too loose and large a sense; at least, I have often heard that called enthusiasm which I should rather call bigotry or fanaticism. Enthusiasm throws beautiful and glowing colours on the objects to which it is directed, while bigotry involves every thing in its own sullen gloom. Enthusiasm listens for the songs of angels, and anticipates the joys of paradise; while fear and horror seem trembling on the brink of final destruction in the dark views of the bigot. Though you are commissioned to proclaim the terrors of the Lord as well as to sound the silver trumpet of the Christian jubilee, your great delight will be to speak to those whom your exhortations have brought to a sense of the deep condemnation into which they have fallen, and the mighty ransom paid for their deliverance. I know of no greater happiness than that of him who, walking through the bounds allotted for the performance of these most important duties, meets with no individual who regards him with indifference, but, on the contrary, sees every countenance lighted up at his approach, except such as shrink from him with conscientious terror.

Though you are now officiating for your father, it will perhaps be some time before you have a regular

charge. Suppose you should in the mean time, before you are so established, come to visit the land of your forefathers, on one side at least, and the kindred of your mother, who still remain to rejoice over you; there is much in Scotland to gratify your imaginative turn of mind, much poetical and traditionary lore, and many objects connected with story and song that have already interested you. . . . . My son is struggling through the thorny paths of the law: he has little of fancy to boast, but he has a good, sound Scotch intellect with a due share of Highland tact and sagacity. Yet though he has engaged in such a worldly profession, I think I am safe to say of him, as does Wordsworth of his Wanderer,—

> "On him the Scottish Church has laid
> The strong arm of her purity."

I hope you read and like Wordsworth: I wish much to hear what you read, and of your opinions on various subjects. Offer my best respects to the Archdeacon, and to your dear mother and Georgina; and believe me, my dear Walter, with warm wishes for your temporal and eternal happiness, your affectionate friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXLVI.

TO MRS. BROWN.

Edinburgh, 16th November, 1821.

My dear Mrs. Brown,

It was really charming to me to receive so long a letter from you; and you could not be more disappointed than I was by my not going down to the Fairlie last autumn. It so happens that I have never in the least infringed on the borders of the shire of Ayr; and, with other more weighty motives to visit you, I should have liked, before I die, to enter on a nook of that district so famed for arms, devotion, and genius; for though I have not a very distinct recollection of the history of that period, I think the Covenant was as strictly maintained there as the cause of Robert Bruce.

I am more sorry than most people can be for the ailing state of your family, because there are few persons who know so well what it is to pass year after year, in fond and fearful anxiety for the sufferings and the danger of the creatures so dear and so deserving. There is one delicate person among the small remains of my once large family who is to me a standing wonder,—I had almost said miracle. It is Isabella, who had very nearly died of the measles when ten years old; the neighbours all gave her up; and, as good worldly folks are easily consoled for the misfortunes of their friends, it was generally said among them, that in so large a family a poor dwining thing would be little missed. Yet so it was that this

frail instrument was not only spared but supported to go through incredible labours of love, to act for days, and watch for nights, with unwearied exertion over the sickness and death of the seemingly robust members of her family; and, notwithstanding the addition of deep sorrow to excessive fatigue, this creature has always been enabled to enter with untired patience on new labours without impairing her feeble frame, or being disabled from further exertions. Excuse me for saying so much of her who has been the blessing and support of her family, without repining at being withdrawn from every scene of youthful enjoyment, or ever thinking that she acted an uncommon part, and made of herself a meritorious sacrifice.

To get as far as possible from this subject, I am going to speak of one, whose correspondence I have been reading, as unlike as possible to this obscure, secluded, and self-devoted being, — even of Horace Walpole, the witty, the ingenious, the amusing, the selfish, the vain, the heartless, and the godless. All this he was, and moreover a declared and virulent Whig, yet evidently considering "the people" as scarcely of the same species with himself, — professing popular opinions, with more aristocratic feelings and manners than any other man of the same reach of understanding. His temper was gay and easy, and he possessed all the gilding and polish of court manners, with a good portion of talent, yet sense enough to know that he could by no means take his place in the first ranks of the aristocracy of genius; and he was too much a noble to be satisfied with ranking

in the second; so he contented himself with being a kind of virtuoso, and writing scraps of poetry in the French style of gay, witty *vers de société*, the only style of poetry in which they excel. The emulation of the noble wit has not been very successful, for all his courtly trifles of this kind are totally deficient in ease and grace,—the only merits to which such verses pretend. If nature made any mistakes one would be tempted to say a mistake had placed him in England, for certainly no Englishman ever had so much of the French character and taste. He seems to me always most at home in France; and it must be allowed that no Englishman ever wrote letters with such light and playful felicity. You are going to silence me with Cowper, the charm of whose elegance, purity, and gentle pleasantry have long delighted me; but I speak only of talent. You are fascinated with Horace's amusing powers, his talent and vivacity, though you see, at the bottom of all, a selfish sceptical character, who, measuring others by himself, believes not in the existence of generosity or any human virtue. Now with Cowper it is the reverse; it is himself, the charming character of the amiable and hallowed recluse unveiled in his letters that forms their chief attraction. The powers must however be great, in the other case, that fix your attention to the careless effusions of one whom you can neither esteem nor love. You will however receive much entertainment from Horace Walpole's Letters, and also considerable information,—shall I add edification? Yes; for it is good to know how little the world has to give to its votaries, and how

sad is the decline of life without some fairer prospects to light its gloom than the world has to bestow.

I think I now walk something better than I did: if ever I go so far from home, I shall certainly visit your domain at the Fairlie. I hope this will find Mrs. Robert quite recovered: I fear her lord must be a very careful man till he can pull a primrose; but with care, and so close a connection with the faculty, I hope he will do well. Convey the kindest regards of all my family to all yours; and believe me, my dear old and ever kind friend, yours, most affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXLVII.

TO MRS. HOOK, WHIPPINGHAM RECTORY, ISLE OF WIGHT.

Edinburgh, 26th December, 1821.

My dear Friend,

I wrote, about a month ago, to Walter, to congratulate him on entering on a profession for which I had thought him originally destined, and to which he appeared to me to have a strongly-marked vocation. I begin to be uneasy at not hearing from any of you; for if the young divine's happier or holier engagements should have engrossed him I should have liked to have at least a bulletin, to ascertain that you were all "as well as could be expected."

I congratulate you on having your friend Lady C. restored to you, so far as being in England brings her within your reach. Your god-daughter, I find,

has early escaped from the share of suffering that all are born to. It is only for those who have had ripened charms, and virtues in full bloom, torn from their bosoms, to know how comparatively easy it is to render up to the Giver of life a creature that knows not sin nor sorrow: yet even that is severe to those who have not known the greater calamity. How patiently ought those to bear the common evils of life who have been blessed with good children, and have not tasted the bitter cup allotted to those deprived of such treasures. . . . . .

Daylight fails; I can, therefore only send my kindest regards, and those of my family, to you and yours, wishing you to live and love as long as life is enjoyable, or longer, if it be the Divine will to exercise you in preparation for a better life by drinking the dregs of this. I never form even a wish for my own departure; enough if I can say, with the patriarch of few and evil days, "Lord, I have waited for thy salvation." Adieu, dear friend: though a veil is drawn between us, I well know that you never will forget your affectionate

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXLVIII.

TO MRS. SMITH.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 8th January, 1822.

I should wish to send something worth carrying by such an interesting bearer as the gentleman from whom you will receive this. He will have so much Edinburgh news to tell, that mine, if I had it, would be superfluous. The news that will please you best is, that I really do begin to find additional strength in the injured limb, and get out of and into a carriage with much more ease than formerly.

I consider myself fortunate in having this pretty often in my power. Mrs. Colonel White offers me a drive when she can; and she has really — drive and carriage out of the question — a much more awakened mind, and more taste for intelligence, than generally falls to the lot of Indian ladies, whose frame, and the spirit it contains, frequently sink into a kind of apathy in that Eastern climate, not to mention the spoiling of women by the absurd deference and attention they receive there. Principle and Christian meekness out of the question, it really requires a masculine strength of understanding to resist the influence of this seductive homage. Lady M. (I mean Sir James's wife) is a hard-minded, clever woman, thinking much more of management and the interest of her family than of these flattering attentions. She told me of her surprise when she went first to India, and saw two gentlemen run at once to support a lady if she but crossed the room; while no lady was allowed

to stoop or rise for the least trifle she wanted. In short, there is no believing how the daughters of Eve are worshipped in the East: youth and beauty are unnecessary to insure attention, — sex and good-breeding are quite enough. To return to Lady M. When she went to India she laughed at all this, as very ridiculous, and considered her own share of it as a tiresome encumbrance; yet when she came to England, and sometimes found herself left, with other ladies, to make the best of her way out of the drawing-room, she owns that she felt herself comparatively insignificant. She said, too, that she met with women in England who, after returning from India, were quite miserable, and openly declared that they could not live in England, where the men were so ill-bred. Does not this show how much better it is for us all to be kept sober? This diseased state of mind was merely the morbid excess of vanity.

You are so much more attentive to your first duties, and so much further advanced in the spiritual life, than I am, that it may appear great presumption in me to find fault with you: but from faults no mortal is exempted; and charity of judgment and opinion forms as essential a part of Christianity as any other species of charity. I am going to find fault with you, or rather with the lady who suggested it, for what you say of the concluding sentence of "The Pirate." I had run it over in a rapid and heedless manner at first, and really did not recollect the allusion in question. I was astonished, on reading over the book lately, to find that any person was so eagerly censorious as to annex the idea of pro-

fanation to so beautiful an application of a phrase originally applied to imperfect creatures in a state of probation. Minna is described as conquering every worldly feeling, and living a life of such duty and devotion as no one can do without the divine blessing on their humble endeavours. And are we not well warranted to say that a parted spirit, arrived at the fruition of the promised bliss, is only "a little lower than the angels?" To found the censure on its being a fiction would be very narrow indeed. What are all parables but instructive fictions? and from the beginning of time has not instruction been conveyed in all languages and forms of life in that manner? If you were to read Bacon, Locke, or any of the writers of Queen Elizabeth's time, you would find, as you do in the sublime and pathetic parts of Shakspeare, scriptural allusions in every page. When the Scriptures were newly translated, they were, as they ought to be, a source of ever-new delight, when considered merely as compositions: the minds of polite as well as pious writers were so saturated with their beauties, that the language of the Sacred Writings mingled with their expressions, as the notes of a sweet and national melody are at times unconsciously warbled by those accustomed to delight in them. It is only since the study of the Scriptures has been comparatively neglected that allusions to them cease to be interwoven with all serious and pathetic composition.

I have unconsciously filled my paper, and have not room to tell you of a gay evening that your grandchildren and Dr. Brewster's children had here lately,

when my son delighted them by playing blindman's buff with them. I cannot tell you, either, how busy and anxious a day this has been with me, having had an important conference relative to the said son, the result of which, I am thankful to say, proved altogether satisfactory. Meantime I long to see William and his boys, and hope they will come before the town grows dull. I am, with sincere affection, not to say veneration, dear old and true friend, yours ever,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXLIX.

TO MRS. IZETT, KINNAIRD HOUSE, DUNKELD.

My dear Madam, Edinburgh, 13th January, 1822.

I put off writing, thinking that every week would bring me some account of you, but in vain; and, moreover, my present confinement from lameness disqualifies much, or rather makes it less convenient, for me to write. My hope, God willing, of conquering it strengthens, however, every day, because I daily see people who have surmounted this same misfortune. Yet I am well aware how many blessings remain to me that are withheld from many others, — wonderfully steady health, friends exceeding most others in constancy and affection, and the children who remain all that I could wish them.

Now I shall not apologise for egotism, because I suppose you will be fully as well pleased to hear of

myself as of any thing I can tell you. Well, then, we must now say something of that grand miscreant Lord Byron, and his last publication, Cain, which I hear is as dull as it is blasphemous and detestable. His lordship, just now, is like a hunted fox; the critics, reviews, and London papers are all after him in full cry; and, certainly, never was satire in its bitterest mood better applied. One cannot help thinking of the Scripture expression—"Out of one fountain proceedeth bitter water and sweet." All the poetry with which the public have been enchanted already from the same quarter must, I think, sink in value, when this notorious breach of every human decency or hallowed reverence is made manifest.

I should tell you of what is of more vital importance, the acquisition that Edinburgh has made in the Rev. Dr. Gordon, of whose pious eloquence I hear much from the best judges, as well as from my own family: I hear him compared by many, and prefered by some, to Dr. Chalmers. We had need of something like this in Edinburgh, for the credit of the Scotch Church. Sir Harry Moncreiff is a good, stern, sound Presbyterian, and there is much substance and solidity in his preaching; and Andrew Thomson has excellent abilities, and, I not only hope, but believe, perfect sincerity: but there is a political and polemical bias about both so strong and obvious that it mingles with their first duties, and gives an air of worldliness adverse to the simplicity of the Gospel. The rest are good men, perform their duties conscientiously and diligently, and are not deficient in learning or understanding; but there are no stars

among them, — no Blairs, or Erskines, or Henrys, or Robertsons, — none whose names have gone beyond the Tweed or crossed the seas. And this is the more to be lamented, because there are so many who, from the lowest origin, contrive to get into the Church without the passport of superior talents, eloquence, or zeal, that it becomes quite necessary that there should be in the capital of our country a little leaven to leaven the whole lump, — some of those attractive or distinguished qualities, which, since the days of inspiration are past, give a kind of necessary consequence and weight to the sacerdotal character. The result of the want of this prominence, not to say pre-eminence, among our clergy is becoming visible. Here is a Mr. Craig, who is of the Episcopal Church, and of that part of it who are denominated, and, I fear, are too apt to denominate themselves, Evangelical. I believe and feel on essential points precisely as they do; yet, in all religious matters, I object to a fence of separation, the purpose of which, in the long run, is full as much to keep others out as to keep ourselves in. Well, this Mr. Craig I have once, only once, heard preach; but I have heard him speak at public meetings, and been in company with him. I believe him to be gentle, amiable, and sincere, and that his doctrine is that of St. Paul, which is quite enough; but his abilities are certainly nothing extraordinary. Yet numbers of our good zealous Presbyterians have left their own churches to crowd his, without any great motive to assign; while many fashionable young ladies resort there on the same principle that they go to hear Catalani.

I write through so many interruptions that, though most willing to amuse you in your wintry seclusion with any thing that occurs, I fear you will find this letter not "a king," but a thing of shreds and patches. Give my best regards to Mr. Izett, and tell him the pretty new crown he gave me has lost none of its original brightness: I keep it as the Vicar of Wakefield's daughters did the guinea they were forbidden ever to change. I am, dear madam, yours, very truly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCL.

TO MRS. BROWN, GLASGOW.

Edinburgh, 10th March, 1822.

My dear Mrs. Brown,

I am charmed with the hope of seeing you once more in Edinburgh, where attractions are multiplying, and where the place itself, in its improved state, should be an attraction to one who, like you, had the advantage of living within the influence of so much taste and talent.

Before I quit the subject of good taste, let me not forget to remind you to ask Mrs. Smith for a sight of our American friend, Mrs. Hall's letter to her. It is comfortable to find a person belonging to our own class possessed of such an awakened mind, and at such an advanced period of life capable of being both useful and agreeable. I suppose you are aware that I mean by our class that of old women, which, as a class, it has been the fashion to hold very cheap every

where except in the Scotch novels and among the North American Indians. The former could not get on without them, the latter hold them in the utmost veneration: their matrons are their counsellors; and the mother of sages or warriors is held in as high estimation as her sons. I think we—old women I mean—begin to be more appreciated since the spread of knowledge has made us all a *thinking* people. Formerly, a woman uncultivated, and moving in a narrow circle, was only of consequence in the days of her youth and in the days of her usefulness; and, unless animated by a lively devotion, fruitful in good works, was apt to grow torpid, and be forgotten by all but her nearest relations when the season of activity was passed. Now that the powers of the mind are more called into action, that season lasts longer; and old women take more interest in the young, and create more interest themselves, by being enabled to turn their experience to better account, and hold a higher place in society. This is well every way: we grow old without growing *mouldy*, and the young mingle our knowledge with their own acquirements.

I am now going to speak of James Smith* and his family, who are, I think, in the way of being as comfortable as possible in their new abode. I really think that, in coming to Edinburgh, James has exactly found his level: he is rich in acquired knowledge, without a shade of pedantry or pretension. On the contrary, having in a manner over-informed his mind, at an early period, to a degree rather preju-

* Eldest son of the late Archibald Smith, Esq., of Jordanhill.

dicial to the tenement of clay, the result has been a kind of mental indolence, that requires the stimulus of intellectual, and in some measure disengaged, society, to make him appear what he really is, and produce his neglected stores of various intelligence. I think he will find himself very much at home in Edinburgh.

What you will very justly value here is a spirit of devotion, which seems daily spreading and pervading the ranks of the once gay and fashionable, so that any person seriously inclined need not go into corners to seek out associates. Every day I hear some new instance of those who have openly enlisted under the Christian banner. If this, in some instances, is done ostentatiously, we have no right to conclude that it is done insincerely, but must just refer any display of this kind to weakness of character, in those whose good intentions are not directed by a sound judgment. A serious perusal of the Word of Life should teach us charity in this respect. When we find faith failing in a trying exigency, in those very disciples who witnessed the Transfiguration, we must not wonder, when the days of inspiration are gone by, that the intellect is not always strengthened where the heart is changed and the conduct is, in the main, under the influence of that change. Vanity, I think, is the first passion that appears in weak minds, and perhaps the last that is conquered. . . . . .

Yes, my dear old friend, daily calls warn us of what may soon, and must ere long, await us. This has been sorely pressed on my mind by the great loss I have lately sustained in my much valued and excellent friend Miss Lowis, who was, like your brother

of Jordanhill, withdrawn from the world as it were unconsciously, and with little or no suffering. Her life was passed in such deeds of active benevolence as none but a heart so liberal, and a mind so powerful, could plan, nor a frame less robust execute; and the steady and sincere piety by which her life was regulated, must have made death, to her, a happy transition to that state of blessed rest that is laid up for the faithful. I humbly desire of my Saviour that this heavy stroke, for such I feel it, may be the means of still more weaning me from a world which I have loved too well, though mine has been a thorny path in going through it. . . . . I have barely room for my best wishes to your sons and their literally good wives; and know me to be your unaltered and grateful friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLI.

TO A FRIEND IN AMERICA.

Edinburgh, 20th April, 1822.

Now my dear Friend, after much unpardonable delay, I am going to address you, and to thank you for many kind and highly-esteemed literary gifts, and more particularly for your steady and warm friendship to me and mine, under all the hard trials that human friendship has to sustain under the combined influence of absence and distance. What I have most to complain of at present are the pains of memory. In the silence and solitude of night, when imagination is too busy, and recollection too much

awakened, I am surrounded by the visionary forms of the departed, till all past emotions are revived with insupportable freshness. I rise, — walk through the room till I tire in my imperfect mode of moving about, — then I ring for a light, and read till I either get interested or grow drowsy. Do not pity me, however; for such is the flexible nature, or perhaps I should call it versatility of my mind, that the next day I am occupied, attentive to every one that comes, and even cheerful. This is not every night: if one is restless, the next is better; and on some nights this paroxysm of feverish recollection does not occur at all. . . . . And now I shall leave a theme, on which I merely meant to touch, for matters more belonging to our present fleeting and uncertain state. So many scenes of beauty and grandeur, so many unblamed enjoyments from the sources of intellect and affection, are vouchsafed to us even while we are dwellers in the dust, — mercies afforded, no doubt, as cordials to support us in our journey, — that it would be worse than ungrateful to reject these alleviating blessings.

I have to thank you for what has been a great source of entertainment to me, and has put it in my power to oblige several others, — I mean the numbers of the North American Review which you have so kindly sent me, bringing me tidings of the progress of taste and literature in that country which I always look back to as a kind of foster-mother; giving also, what is very interesting to us, the transatlantic opinions on the land of my nativity, and its literary productions. I often think of sending you in return

something new from this place, but I despair of sending any thing you have not anticipated. The novelty most spoken of at present I could not send you if I would, for it is too dear; and I would not send it if I could, because I consider it as brimful of the poison of misanthropy and bitter party-prejudice. The work I mean is the Memoirs of the Reign of George the Second, by Horace Walpole, latterly Lord Orford: it is a three or five guinea book, and was left by the author to his heirs, with an injunction to be published ten years after his death. Fear, more than honesty, I presume, made them defer the publication for twenty years after this period; and now Lord Holland has thought proper to open this Pandora's box, and pour forth its pernicious and very malicious contents upon the devoted heads of the sons and successors of all the great characters, whose talents and whose virtues shed lustre over names that will be honoured and revered, while that of Horace lives with the French wits and philosophers of the last century, to show, like them, how worthless are wit and talents, when perverted to be the implements of mischief to mankind.

If time is a thing to be accounted for, how shall we account for that spent in reading bad books, when the world abounds with more that instruct or harmlessly amuse us than a lifetime of little leisure is sufficient to peruse? How dreadful is the sentence by which we are doomed to account for every idle word! and yet the usages of society force the best of us to listen at least to much of what is worse than idle. But we have no such pretext for reading pernicious books, which their authors would never publish if those who

are content "to dwell in decencies for ever" would reinforce the truly virtuous,—not in opposition to them, for which even the latter are not always qualified, but in total neglect of them. The cure for such enormities would be to let them alone. If they lie on every table, and furnish the talk of every circle, it is no longer safe to let them alone. It then becomes necessary to treat the authors of such works as poor Emilia was for treating the secret enemies of Desdemona:—

> "To put in ev'ry honest hand a whip,
> And lash the culprits naked through the world."

I find myself unawares growing very critical, and writing very like a person ambitious to be thought possessed of literary taste. I fear that you will think that I have, at least, dressed up my injured limb in a blue stocking; and you will be so far right; for I certainly have both read and thought a great deal more, in consequence of my lameness and seclusion, than I otherwise should have done. But I never think of entering into discussions of this length with friends more within my reach, who have the same acquaintances, and can be interested in details of those we mutually know; but at a distance so formidable, and after an absence so long, the literature of the day serves for a common ground on which to meet and compare opinions. . . . . .

Now I have more to say than when I began; but must conclude by assuring you that I am, with the highest regard and esteem, dear Friend, yours very truly,

ANNE GRANT.

Letter CCLII.

TO MRS. HOOK.

Prince's Street, Edinburgh,
8th May, 1822.

My dear Friend,

Firmly convinced of your undecaying attachment, and liberally indulgent to all the claims upon your time, and more particularly to your uncertain state of health, I am neither jealous of your affection nor distrustful of my own desert, such as it is. By desert I do not mean any of those qualities for which people are talked of; but sober realities, perfect sincerity, the capacity of loving long and well, and that simplicity which has been cherished in retirement, and preserved amid the cold and bitter blasts of adversity, like alpine plants under snow. These are my claims, and yours is not the heart to reject them. . . . . Now I know, though you have not told me so for a long time, that you are anxious to know of my lameness. My advance in walking is very slow indeed; yet it is an advance; and the situation of my house affords facilities for taking exercise without incurring risk of accidents. I live opposite to the old Castle, the marsh below which has been drained some years since, and is now converted into a garden, not a public, nor yet a private one, but destined solely to the amusement of the favoured inhabitants of Prince's Street. To these Elysian retreats each family possesses two dear-bought keys, and through these walks, with the help of my wooden supports, I traverse nearly half a mile at a

time; and in the lower recesses there are sheltered seats, where I read and work in the open air, and am joined sometimes by pleasant friends.

I have hardly ever seen so many strangers as this winter; I mean foreigners and strangers from America and England. Here was a Prussian Countess, who spoke English admirably, and was much about the late Queen Charlotte. Of all the strangers I have seen of late none pleased me so much as Maria Cosway, who is going to reside in her native Italy, but came down to see Scotland before she takes farewell of Britain. She spent the last evening with me, and greatly deepened the impression her character and manners had made on me before. Her opinions are so sound and independent of fashion and the world, and so superior to those of a mere artist; her dress, too, and every thing about her, so simple, the stamp of primitive goodness so well preserved through much intercourse with the world, and all her various talents made subservient to the love of God and her fellow-creatures. It does me good to meet such an unsophisticated being.

A thick cloud has for some time past hung over the wonted gaiety of Edinburgh. It began with the death of the accomplished and lamented Sir Alexander Boswell. Since then seven married women, in the highest station of life here, have been carried suddenly off in the prime of life, leaving families to lament them. Mrs. —— is particularly regretted: she died of her eleventh child,—all living,—and certainly none could be dearer to her own family or more valued in society. I have said much more than I intended, and

therefore shall say nothing of your friend Lady C., and some other subjects of interest. My family join in affectionate remembrance to yours, more particularly the Archdeacon and our long-loved Eliza. I am, dear friend, your unchangeable

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLIII.

TO MRS. GRANT, LATE OF DUTHIL, STRATHSPEY.

Seafield, near Edinburgh,
30th May, 1822.

My dear Madam,

By coming down here rather unexpectedly, I fear I have missed an opportunity of which your grandson told me, going north; but I am so ill pleased with myself for my long delay in writing, that I am determined to seize on that leisure which so constantly eludes my grasp at home, and to do what I have wished and intended for months, to preserve my place in the memory of yourself and some other old friends.

I was very sorry to find from your letter that your daughter's farm had been so unproductive last year, but hope this mild winter and genial spring promise well for a blessing on the labours of agriculture; if, indeed, the enormous sin of complaining, as it is now the fashion to do, of the liberal bounty of Providence, does not bring a blast or mildew on the productions of the earth. This is a new and most revolting species of impiety, which appears to me very daring. I find that you have the best possible

accounts from India of your progeny there. Mrs. Cumming, of Logie, whom I often see, and who is very much liked here, has, I think, a great deal of courage in sending out her promising son William, having already three others in that burning climate. I am glad to hear from your grandson that your worthy neighbour, that fine antiquity Tullochgriban, has so completely recovered from the effects of the severe illness which had once appeared so alarming to all his friends. Be so good, when you see the family, to offer them the best respects of me and mine.

What can possibly ail the Inverness people at my excellent friend Charles Grant? I hear of a great clamour against him, but could never yet distinctly hear of even the alleged pretence for all this vituperation. And young Charles *, too, who combines every amiable virtue with every finer talent and more elegant accomplishment, and in whom all this admirable superstructure is founded on the immovable rock of a firm confidence in the Author of his salvation,—he, too, has to encounter malevolence from the very people whom he has bent all his endeavours to serve in the most essential manner. It is odd how it should be so; but I have always had a good deal to do with Ireland, and hear the opinion of some of the first characters who live in it through the medium of those who live among them. The very worst they say, or can say, of him is, that he was too good and too indulgent; that, judging from his own clear

* The Right Hon. Charles Grant (now Lord Glenelg), then Secretary for Ireland, and M. P. for the county of Inverness, formerly represented by his father, Mr. Charles Grant.

breast, he thought better of others than they deserved, and kept lenient measures with those unhappy distressed people too long.

Speaking of Ireland, I do not know if ever I mentioned one of the many agreeable acquisitions in the way of acquaintance, which softened my sad pilgrimage when I went with my ever-lamented son to London, to prepare him for going to India. This was Mrs. Primate Stuart, a person greatly beloved and esteemed by every one to whom she was known, and a great benefactor to the Irish peasantry about Armagh, where the Archbishop lived. She was not merely bountiful, but maternal, in the care with which she attended to their health and comfort, and the pains she took to have them instructed in useful arts, as well as in the knowledge most essential to every condition of life. She was a daughter of Governor Penn, the descendant of the founder of Pennsylvania: her mother was Lady Juliana Fermor, daughter of the Earl of Pomfret. When Governor Penn, a grave man of fifty, with a broad hat, a plain suit, and a most inflexible countenance, came over to avoid the storm of the American Revolution, he who had never paid the least attention to a lady before, was smitten with Lady Juliana, then a lively, beautiful young creature, and one of the ornaments of the Court. She was, however, very pious, and showed in all things the most perfect submission to her mother's will; and, to the surprise of all, willingly accepted the grave elderly Quaker, with whom she was very happy. Granville Penn, one of the most amiable men I know, is her son. . . . . .

With best regards from all this family, believe me, dear madam, yours, with regard,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLIV.

TO MRS. HOOK, WHIPPINGHAM RECTORY, ISLE OF WIGHT.

Edinburgh, 3d June, 1822.

My dear and ever amiable penitent, you are welcome to me in every shape, — always tenderly forgiven; and this is more meritorious than it would be if I did not *feel* on those occasions. It is with a countenance more in sorrow than in anger that I look at the distant dates of your letters. Breakfast and your letter came together: to the former the latter proved a pleasant episode, or interlude, if that is better. The instant I had done I came up stairs to write, to show how perfectly I feel and comprehend your uneasiness. I spent the whole of last week in the country, accompanied by Isabella, — if I can properly call Seafield, not a mile from Leith, the country. I was paying a long-promised visit to two Miss Herons, worthy, estimable, single ladies, with whom, since I came to Edinburgh, I have revived an acquaintance of forty years' standing. They are a sort of people that I like exceedingly, in whom the old genuine Scotch character still lives and flourishes: they are intelligent and well informed, without much polish or exterior refinement; and they combine economy with most judicious liberality and charity, — I mean as to its objects. They have

brought up a family of orphans, three nieces and a nephew, in a most liberal manner. Creech, the famous Edinburgh bookseller, noted for his wealth and his wit, being distantly related to the family—I mean the orphans, — left his large fortune among them, of which the greater part fell to the lot of the nephew, a very excellent, indeed accomplished, young man. Being bred to the Church before this wealth came into his hands, at the age of twenty Mr. Watson* formed the resolution of being, notwithstanding, an arduous parish priest, not thinking it right to turn his back upon the altar because the means of doing good were thus multiplied.

My week passed very agreeably with these good people, whose pleasant house stands on the edge of the sea, and is spacious and most comfortable, while their pretty garden is just large enough for my four-footed walk. While there, we had some very interesting visiters; but I shall only mention one, whom you would both pity and admire, if you knew her. This is Mrs. Owen, wife to the visionary philanthropist, of whom you and every one else have heard, and with whom he received a very large fortune in the establishment at Lanark. "Love was the cause of her mourning;" for much she has mourned over his strange bewilderment of mind and deistical opinions, being herself a woman of the very best principles and conduct, with deep and humble piety. She hoped, vainly hoped, that his wild speculations

* Formerly minister of the parish of Burntisland, Fifeshire, and author of several devotional works.

would subside on his becoming a husband and father. She bears her hard lot with great resignation outwardly, but, nevertheless feels it deeply, though she does not speak of it. He is the best tempered and most benevolent of all projectors; and in his domestic life is indulgent and amiable, kind to all about him, and continually spinning a cobweb scheme of being kind to all the world.

Now, I came up to-day to the drawing-room, thinking no one knew that I was come home, and that I should get a quiet morning. But no; here is a friend I cannot exclude, and I must suspend my scribble. Well, you see I tell you all this, which perhaps is not very interesting, because I wish you to be present with me, to know what I am doing, and whom I am caring for, &c.; for if I only write on general subjects, like a reviewer or a person like Iago, who can be nothing if not critical, you will loose the distinct idea of your old friend, and have only a paper personage in misty and uncertain prospect..... Do not regret my lameness. My surgeon says, that I will live the longer for this accident: my restless activity he thinks wore me out; but now I must be quiescent, and ease, the wish of age, will be imposed on me of necessity.

Did I ask before if you know Lady Frances Beresford, once a distinguished beauty, and still a very fine woman; she has been with her daughter on the Continent and in Italy for some time past. They spent last winter in Edinburgh, where we saw them very often. Lady Frances is a person of great uprightness of intention, generous, and charitable, I know, at the

expense of much self-denial. Miss Beresford's is a higher order of mind, accomplished, or perhaps I should rather say embellished, to the utmost.

I am glad that the Archdeacon had it in his power to refuse a Deanery, but hope he will accept the next. I am ever your attached and affectionate friend,

ANNE GRANT.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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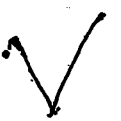

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